TELOS

Number 27 **Spring 1976**

Table of Contents

Articles:

HERBERT MARCUSE: *On the Problem of the Dialectic*
JOHN FEKETE: *Northrop Frye*
GIAN ENRICO RUSCONI: *Korsch's Political Development*
U. SANTAMARIA, A. MANVILLE: *Lenin and the Transition*
JEAN ELSHTAIN: *Social Relations in the Classroom*
RICHARD WINFIELD: *The Logic of Marx's Capital*

Notes and Commentary:

RUSSELL JACOBY: *A Falling Rate of Intelligence?*
JOHN ZERZAN: *Unionization in America*
FRANCO FERRAROTTI: *The Struggle against Bureaucracy*
JEREMY SHAPIRO: *Reply to Miller on* Legitimation Crisis
DICK HOWARD: *A Clarification of Habermas*
MAYNARD SOLOMON: *Eleven Theses on Beethoven*

Reviews:

JOEL KOVEL: M. Schneider, *Neurosis and Civilization*
SCOTT SANDERS: S. Morawski, *Fundamentals of Aesthetics*
BILL MAYRL: L. Goldmann, *Philosophy of Enlightenment*
DUNCAN SMITH: H.P. Duerr, *Ni Dieu—ni Metre*
DOUG KELLNER: C. Pozzoli, ed., *Jahrbuch Arbeiterbewegung*
TOM MORRIS: M. Solomon, ed., *Marxism and Art*
JOHN HARGREAVES: P.K. Feyerabend, *Against Method*
KEITHA FINE: S. Zukin, *Beyond Marx and Tito*
TORONTO *TELOS* GROUP: *Short Journal Reviews*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TELOS
a quarterly journal of radical social theory

Editor: *Paul Piccone*
Managing Editor: *Patricia Tummons*
Review Editor: *Paul Breines*
St. Louis Group: *John Ainlay, Roberta Arnold, Carl Boggs, Ruth Heydebrand, Tim Luke, Jonathan Moreno, Paul Piccone, Patricia Tummons, Jacqueline Zinner*
Toronto Group: *John Fekete, Dorothy Gehrke, John Keane, Steve Levine, Janet Lum, Jack Mendelson, Paul Mier, Ray Morrow, Peter Murphy, Patrick Patterson, Gregory Renault, Will Ross, Brian Singer, Robynne Snow, Wodek Szemberg, Georgia Warnke, Andrew Wernick, Susan Wheeler, Rick Wolin, Nick Xenos*
Editorial Associates: *Andrew Arato, Jean Cohen, Robert D'Amico, John Fekete, Bart Grahl, David Gross, Ruth Heydebrand, Dick Howard, Russell Jacoby, Joel Kovel, William Leiss, Mark Poster, James Schmidt*

Subscription Rates

One year individual	$10.00	One year institutional	$15.00
Two year individual	$20.00	Two year institutional	$30.00

Foreign orders add 10%.

Available back issues: Nos. 9-26. Cost to individuals is $2.00 per issue from 9-20; $2.50 from 21 onward. Institutions pay $3.00 each for back issues. Nos. 1-8 are out of print, but may be obtained through University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106 USA.

Telos is published quarterly in the Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. *Telos* No. 27 corresponds to Vol. 9, No. 1. Second class postage paid at St. Louis, Missouri. Address all correspondence to:

TELOS
Department of Sociology
Washington University
St. Louis, Missouri 63130 USA.

Copyright © 1976 by Telos Press Ltd.
Permission to reprint may be readily obtained from the Editors.

Telos welcomes unsolicited manuscripts. We request, however, that they be cleanly typed, double spaced, on only one side of the page, with footnotes consecutively numbered. Authors must provide at least two copies of each manuscript. Rejected manuscripts will not be returned unless a self-addressed, stamped envelope has been provided by the author. Preferably papers should make sense, avoid rambling, and be in English.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TELOS

Number 27 Spring 1976

Table of Contents

Articles:

Introduction to Marcuse's "On the Problem of the Dialectic" 3
Morton Schoolman

On the Problem of the Dialectic 12
Herbert Marcuse

Northrop Frye: Parameters of Mythological Structuralism 40
John Fekete

Korsch's Political Development 61
Gian Enrico Rusconi

Lenin and the Problem of the Transition 79
Ulysses Santamaria and Alain Manville

The Social Relations of the Classroom: A Moral and Political Perspective . 97
Jean Bethke Elshtain

The Logic of Marx's Capital 111
Richard Winfield

Notes and Commentary:

A Falling Rate of Intelligence? 141
Russell Jacoby

Unionization in America 147
John Zerzan

The Struggle of Reason against Total Bureaucratization 157
Franco Ferrarotti

Reply to Miller's Review of *Legitimation Crisis* 170
Jeremy J. Shapiro

Moral Development and Ego Identity: A Clarification 176
Dick Howard

Eleven Theses on Beethoven 182
Maynard Solomon

Reviews:

Michael Schneider, *Neurosis and Civilization* 185
Joel Kovel

Stefan Morawski, *Inquiries into the Fundamentals of Aesthetics* 195
Scott Sanders

Lucien Goldmann, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment* 199
William W. Mayrl

Hans Peter Duerr, *Ni Dieu—ni Mètre* 208
Duncan Smith

Claudio Pozzoli, ed., *Marxistische Revolutionstheorien* 212
Douglas Kellner

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Maynard Solomon, ed., *Marxism and Art* 218
Tom Morris
Paul K. Feyerabend, *Against Method* 230
John Hargreaves
Sharon Zukin, *Beyond Marx and Tito* 240
Keitha Saspin Fine
Short Journal Reviews 247
Toronto Telos *Group*

Notes on Contributors

MORTON SCHOOLMAN teaches political science at Bowdoin College in Maine. He is presently completing a book on Marcuse. JOHN FEKETE, a member of the Toronto *Telos* Group, has written a yet-unpublished book on the New Criticism and now teaches English at York University. GIAN ENRICO RUSCONI has authored a book on *Critical Theory* soon to appear in English. Currently he teaches sociology at the University of Trento. Unfortunately, we know nothing about ULYSSES SANTAMARIA and ALAIN MANVILLE. JEAN BETHKE ELSHTAIN teaches political science at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. RICHARD WINFIELD is a graduate student in philosophy at Yale working on the Hegelian structure of Marx's thought. Readers baffled by Winfield's pseudo-teutonic style are advised to read Hegel for clarification. RUSSELL JACOBY is a *Telos* editor and frequent contributor. A former graduate student at UCLA, JOHN ZERZAN is now unemployed in San Francisco. FRANCO FERRAROTTI, editor of *Critica Sociologica*, teaches sociology at the University of Rome. DICK HOWARD is a *Telos* editor and teaches philosophy at SUNY at Stony Brook. MAYNARD SOLOMON has authored a book on Beethoven and runs a New York recording firm. Another *Telos* editor, JOEL KOVEL, author of *White Racism,* is a practicing psychoanalyst and teaches at Yeshiva University. SCOTT SANDERS has written a book on Melville and now teaches English at Indiana University. WILLIAM MAYRL teaches sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. DUNCAN SMITH teaches German at Brown University. DOUGLAS KELLNER has frequently contributed to *Telos* and is at present teaching philosophy at the University of Texas in Austin. TOM MORRIS is a graduate English student at SUNY at Buffalo. JOHN HARGREAVES is a lecturer in sociology at Goldsmiths College of the University of London. KEITHA SASPIN FINE presently works at the department of political studies at the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

Announcements

TELOS is attempting to put together a special issue on America, past, present, and future. Work on such specific topics as the question of American "exceptionalism," American labor, popular and high culture, the development of the left and possibilities for radical social change in the United States would be especially welcomed. Yet any other work that tries to come to terms with America from a perspective congenial to that of TELOS is also invited. Deadline for submission of manuscripts is August, 1976. To expedite circulation, send copies of manuscripts to both the Toronto *Telos* Group (240 Vanier College, York University, Downsview, Ontario M3J 1P3 Canada), and to the St. Louis *Telos* Group (Sociology Department, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri 63130 USA).

The Interview with Cornelius Castoriadis printed in *Telos* 23 was translated from Agence Presse Liberation, Basse Normandie, with the permission of C. Castoriadis. *Telos* apologizes to APL for neglecting to give it credit. For those interested, we add that APL also publishes a small journal, *L'Anti-Mythes*, which can be obtained from: F. Berthout, 30 rue des Jardins, 14000 Caen, France.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Introduction to Marcuse's "On the Problem of the Dialectic"

by Morton Schoolman

Since a comprehensive exposition of the dialectic in Marcuse's social theory cannot be undertaken here—in fact, such a project would require a dialectical analysis of the development of Marcuse's work in relation to changing socio-historical conditions—the following will focus on a central problem confronting critical theory: the coordination of all modes of discourse with the dynamic of advanced industrial society which has eliminated all forms of negation of the prevailing social order. Their ideological conformity reduces all cultural dimensions to expressions of a totally reified universe of discourse. Alienation and objectification do not merely "overlap phenomenologically" as they had during the premonopolistic stages of capitalism,[1] but an apparent identity has been forged between them, its temporary status notwithstanding.

This situation requires the search for a critical basis within the established constellations of political power. Marcuse's efforts to restore the critical foundation to theory should be examined at least within four contexts: an explication of work in his early (1928-1932) period, with an emphasis on the relation between dialectics, ontology and historicity; Marcuse's sustained critique of empiricism, positivism and operationalism commencing with his membership in the Frankfurt Institute (1933); the dialectics of instinctual domination and metapsychological theory; and the dialectics of Marcuse's aesthetic theory. This introduction will deal with the first of these tasks.

The nature and extent of Heidegger's influence on Marcuse's early writings has been the subject of considerable debate.[2] Although Goldmann's position seems to be compelling, it ultimately turns out to be indefensible: "Marcuse's early articles. . . were written on a conceptual and philosophical level, beyond concrete historical analysis—on the plane where basically any philosophy of the concept, from Plato to Descartes to Kant, is situated. It was a

1. Cf. Shlomo Avineri, *Karl Marx: Social and Political Thought* (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 102-104.

2. Cf., for example, Mitchell Franklin, "The Irony of the Beautiful Soul of Herbert Marcuse," *Telos* 6 (Fall 1970), pp. 30-35; Pier Aldo Rovatti, "Critical Theory and Phenomenology," *Telos* 15 (Spring 1973), pp. 25-40; Lucien Goldmann, "Understanding Marcuse," *Partisan Review* 3 (1971), pp. 247-262; Alfred Schmidt, "Existential-Ontologie und historischer Materialismus bei Herbert Marcuse," *Antworten auf Herbert Marcuse,* ed. Jürgen Habermas (Frankfurt am Main, 1968), pp. 17-49; Paul Piccone and Alexander Delfini, "Herbert Marcuse's Heideggerian Marxism," *Telos* 6 (Fall 1970), pp. 36-46; Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination* (Boston, 1973), pp. 28-29, and particularly pp. 71-77. A recently published work views Marcuse as the predominant influence on the development of Heideggerian-Marxism in Western and parts of Eastern Europe. Cf. Rheinhart Maurer, *Revolution und Kehre* (Frankfurt am Main, 1975).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Heideggerian leftover within a system that was no longer Heideggerian."[3] More serious criticism concentrates on Marcuse's preoccupation with ontology seen as an adoption of an ontological foundation for critical theory, resulting either in a conservatism peculiar to the positivistic sciences, or in an idealist reification standing outside of history. Rovatti has argued that Adorno's and Horkheimer's, as well as Marcuse's, failure to provide critical theory with a non-ontological foundation drives it into the abstractions of ontology: "It should be pointed out that critical theory, in its subsequent development, has resolutely denied Marcuse's [ontological] thesis and, with Adorno, has come to a total liquidation of ontology. But, it should be added, without succeeding even with Adorno, to indicate an alternative theoretical route, i.e., a way not to fall back every time in an ontological position—whether one likes it or not. It is true that the Frankfurt School, in its most recent phase (after 1940) oscillates between the Marcusean view, which has remained basically unaltered, and the renunciation of every foundation complemented by the emphasis on the negative character of reason. But it is easy to see that it is only a matter of surface oscillation; ultimately, even Adorno's position reveals an ontological mortgage."[4] As we will show, this claim is very problematic.

Reviewing Marcuse's *Hegels Ontologie*, Adorno saw it as a departure from a non-dialectical and non-materialist Heideggerian phenomenology, indicating that Marcuse held a contrary position before that work appeared.[5] Yet, the degree to which Heidegger's vocabulary animates Marcuse's work before 1932 may have given rise to the tendency to equate, as apparently Adorno and others have,[6] the employment of Heidegger's concepts with the errors with which they are often associated. Actually, there is far less critical approval of Heidegger's phenomenology in Marcuse's first theoretical stage than is usually assumed. In his 1928 essay on the phenomenology of historical materialism,[7] Marcuse depicted Heidegger's being as completely dependent on a socially and politically undifferentiated transhistorical reality, and unequivocally sacrificed to an endless continuum of exogenous determinations of existence. Objective material factors are confronted as a pre-given "heritage" within which new possibilities can be seized. Whereas inauthentic being surrenders by passive acquiescence to its heritage by refusing potentiality and leaving it fallow, freedom is the will to oppose such decadence through the acknowledgement of the facticity of existential determination and through a concern for being. This is expressed as. the resolve to realize its essence as the historical restructuring of determinate

3. Goldmann, *op.cit.*, p. 249. By adopting an identical point of view regarding the discursive style of *Eros and Civilization*, I fell into a similar error. Cf. my "Marcuse's 'Second Dimension'," *Telos* 23 (Spring 1975), p. 89.

4. Rovatti, *op.cit.*, pp. 32-33.

5. T.W. Adorno, review of *Hegels Ontologie und die Grundlegung einer Theorie der Geschichtlichkeit*, in *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* 1:3 (1932), p. 410. For the significance of this review in a related context, cf. Jay, *op.cit.*, pp. 28-29.

6. Cf. Piccone and Delfini, *op.cit.*, p. 42; Jay, *op.cit.*, pp. 71-72.

7. Originally published in *Philosophische Hefte* 1 (1928), pp. 45-68. English translation: "Contributions to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism," *Telos* 4 (Fall 1969), pp. 3-34.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

possibilities into a new heritage (the creation of a new set of objective historical conditions). History, as the basic existential determination of being, appears as ontology.

It is this supra-historical and immutable existential nature of determination that Marcuse finds objectionable. Here, being *remains* apprehended through the categorical, even though historicity directs us towards a comprehension of existence as historical. Because Heidegger's "phenomenology of human existence falls short of the necessary clarity and completeness [as] it bypasses the material condition of existence,"[8] Marcuse seeks to dissolve the categorical into the precategorical, ontology into concrete historical existence. Historicity and ontology would then become the products and derivations of analyses into any given set of historical conditions. The essential dialectical properties of historicity would become evident, and only then would the fundamental structure of existence become palpable.[9]

Marcuse's emphasis on the concrete dialectical structure of existence as the material basis of historicity demonstrates that he is not concerned with ontology as such. Within Marcuse's framework no distinction between subject and object, the spiritual and the material, the ideological and economic, the ontological and ontic can be sustained.[10] Marcuse's dialectical phenomenology collapses all such dualistic constructions: "The old questions whether spirit came before matter or consciousness before being cannot at all be settled by dialectical phenomenology and turns out to be meaningless. What is actually given is only historical social existence which is *both* spirit and matter, consciousness and being. Only in this context is it possible to reach any conclusions concerning fundamental relationships. Any distortion of this in the direction of taking a part as an absolute, is dogmatism and makes a mockery of the dialectic, because it begins dialectical analysis with a rigid abstraction, a *primum absolutum*."[11] The dualisms that Marcuse historicizes are, for the most part, "terms that merely indicate traditionally differentiated domains of inquiry."[12]

How can we account for Marcuse's tolerant disposition toward entertaining the categories of traditional theory? This indicates a significant parallel between "Contributions to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism" and *One Dimensional Man*. Marcuse admits in 1928 that "historical existential forms (social systems) can prevent the realization of certain existential values,

8. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

9. Heidegger's method of developing a concept of historicity without grounding it in concrete material existence is considered in Marcuse's dissertation where the former's Hegelian underpinnings are elucidated. Cf. Herbert Marcuse, *Hegels Ontologie und die Grundlegung einer Theorie der Geschichtlichkeit* (Frankfurt am Main, 1932).

10. Because Marcuse's critical theory partially focuses on the theory of a repressed instinctual and biological dimension, it is often incorrectly understood as having its basis in a naturalistic eschatology resembling a traditional ontology. The regression to an ontological position is thought to emerge from a notion of being as biologically preconstituted. No conclusion could be less accurate. Metapsychology guarantees no rationality independent and outside of the historical process.

11. "Contributions to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism," *op.cit.*, p. 30.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which are realizable only within a new form."[13] This recognition that societal mechanisms could feasibly obstruct ideological transcendence reappears in *One Dimensional Man* as the conviction that the objective contradictions of advanced industrial society can be permanently managed. The forces of containment contract the universe of meaning engendering an artificial ideological conformity and an identity of being and social being. For Marcuse, the movement of the concrete historical dialectic can be halted. This halting has produced total reification, which is simultaneously the cause and the effect of reification depending on whether attention is focused on the social organization of production or its ideological superstructure. Marcuse's response to the phenomenon of total reification is to embrace abstractions. The facticity of social homogeneity is opposed by historicity, which serves to "recall" the concrete dialectical structure of being.[14] There can never be a "uniform world of meaning related to a uniform existence."[15] The truth of dialectics is transferred from the cognitive to the recognitive. Originally, the concrete historical and dialectical nature of being was an analytic *a priori.* Subsequently, when the dialectic appears neutralized, abstract historicity becomes the synthetic *a priori* demonstration of historical being. Historicity explodes the reified expressions of subjectivity, and this is the reason for Marcuse's attachment to the categories of traditional theory. Marcuse, on the one hand, demanded that "Heidegger's phenomenology of human existence be driven to dialectical concreteness so that it can be fulfilled in a phenomenology of concrete existence and of the historically concrete act demanded of it. And, on the other hand, the dialectical method of knowing must go the other way and become phenomenological so to incorporate concreteness *in a complete account of its object.* In the analysis of the given, it must not simply locate it historically, or indicate its roots in an historical existential situation. It must also ask *whether the given is thereby exhausted,* or whether it contains an authentic meaning which, although not a-historical, endures through all historicity."[16] This meaning is the dialectic itself.

In "On the Problem of the Dialectic," the significance of historicity continues to lie in its utility as a method of recovering knowledge of the concrete dialectic. Marcuse begins by analyzing the Platonic dialectic because it sired the development of the concept of historicity. Consequently, he focused on the pertinent sections of those dialogues most germane to the elaboration and evolution of Plato's dialectic: the *Republic, Phaedrus, Theaetetus, Sophist,* and *Philebus.* This is not an exercise in the history of ideas, but an attempt to capture the dialectic's original meaning and critical

13. *Ibid.,* p. 24.

14. The category of "recall," "recollection," or "remembrance" appears within a variety of contexts within Marcuse's work, though its function is continuous. See, for example, *Eros and Civilization* (New York, 1962), pp. 18, 96-114; and *Counter-Revolution and Revolt* (Boston, 1972), pp. 69-74. Insofar as it brilliantly animates *Social Amnesia* (Boston, 1975), the category and its critical powers are elucidated with exceptional clarity by Jacoby.

15. "Contributions to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism," *op.cit.,* p. 26.

16. *Ibid.,* p. 22. Italics added.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

intention, since Marcuse embraces the abstract categories of traditional theory only to rescue the dialectic from reification.

The inclusion of the notion of "becoming" in the dialogues after the *Republic* (the *Theaetetus*) allows the Platonic dialectic to evolve from a declarative "ability" or "cognitive power" able to discern "true being" or "unity" within a world of "multiplicity" and "untrue being"—maintaining a separation between essence and the "apparently real," "being" and "non-being"—to a comprehension of the realization of being as an infinite series of progressive superventions and movement through its determining forms. The decisive steps in the *Philebus* are the incorporation of movement *into* being, as opposed to movement *toward* being and, most importantly, the mediation of dialectical movement by successive "limitations." This is not a qualifying conception, but an essential aspect of all modes of being. It insures that the evolution of new forms of being emerges not only in opposition to, but also out of, old forms in which they are contained. Limitation or determination points toward historicity. But as the former notions lack either an existential or concrete historical basis and are the products of an *a priori* intuition, their restriction to the Platonic theory of forms aborts the concept of historicity. Consequently, within Marcuse's analysis of Plato's dialectic, the alien and mutually exclusive character of idealism and historicity is confirmed, and by laying claim to the latter, Marcuse abjures the former.

Hegel's addition of an historical dimension to the Platonic dialectic transforms classical ontology into historicity and prepares the groundwork for historicity as the categorical structure of the ontic. Being unfolds according to principles of development that are grasped as dialectical. Existential determination, historicity, has its origins within the basic negativity of all reality, and "not only reality as a whole, but of each particular, individual reality."[17]

Understood dialectically, history is the foundation of historicity. But so long as the emphasis remained, as it had with Hegel, on the structural and existential, on the essence of being rather than on the *concrete determination* of the essence of being, history is turned into an abstraction, and a tension arises between essence and existence, ontology and the ontic, historicity and history. Like Marx, Marcuse underlines the significance of "abstractions." Though "viewed apart from real history, [abstractions] have in themselves no value whatsoever," they "serve to facilitate the arrangement of historical material."[18] For Marcuse, historicity is needed to recall the concrete dialectic *as* the arrangement of historical material and therefore functions as a critique of reification by indicating the manner in which the rigidity and isolation of being is overcome. Historicity not only posits, but is posited as its own negation. Since for Marcuse, in 1930, reification is actually an ideological illusion, critical theory stands in no need of a supplementary foundation.

Marcuse recognizes historicity as an abstraction for a contemporary critical

17. "On the Problem of the Dialectic."

18. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, ed. C.J. Arthur (New York, 1973), p. 48.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

theory of society: "We now ask what is meant by the dialectic as a determination of the essence of historical being and to what extent the designation of such being as dialectical is a true characterization of its real being. And secondly, can all being, or if not, which being, can and should be understood as historical and thus as dialectical? *Both* questions lead beyond the framework of Hegelian philosophy, on the one hand to the *resumption of the dialectic in Marx* [regarding the first question], and on the other to the general formulation of the problem."[19] The relation of the Platonic to the Hegelian dialectic and to its conception of historicity, and the relation of the latter to the Marxian dialectic is not exclusively an historical problem concerning the development of concrete dialectics. Such an investigation shows that historicity, because of the question it poses, *necessarily* leads to a formulation of concrete dialectics. The essence of being is not part of historicity as such, but can only be comprehended if being is grounded and historicity is explicated in the concreteness of the Marxist dialectic. In this context it is useful to cite Lukács' argument that the dialectic becomes a "scientific" problem in a reified social order.[20] By showing the dialectic to be a matter of consciousness, or "remembrance, a mode of dissociation from the given facts, a mode of 'mediation' which breaks, for short moments, the omnipresent power of the given facts,"[21] Marcuse continues Lukács' effort to rescue the dialectic from further reification by preventing it from becoming a scientific matter, whether it be a science of being (ontology), or philosophy of social science. By galvanizing a sensibility for those concrete dialectical tendencies that promote and impede change, historicity provides an anti-positivistic region of experience against which the facts of the prevailing social universe can be grasped and superceded. Historicity discovers the universal in the particular and seizes "the true content of the social system as against its immediate form of existence." Marcuse, like Marx, reduces Hegel's abstract universal to the concrete universality of history, spurns the idealist comprehension of historical change in terms of an absolute, and elaborates the dialectic not as a science of logic, but as the logos of real history. In contradistinction to Jacoby, the point here is that Marcuse does *not* turn history into a category of being,[22] but retains it as an historical category.

19. "On the Problem of the Dialectic." Italics added. Regarding the second question, "which being can be understood as historical and dialectical," Marcuse subsequently argues, quite correctly, that the dividing line between historical and non-historical, dialectical and non-dialectical being is ontological. This does not mean that being is ontological. On the contrary, he is pointing out that the *distinction* between historical and non-historical being is ontological. Ontology can only make this distinction by accounting for it, that is, by explaining why nature, for example, is not historical, thought it can *become* historical and dialectical through objectification. Ontology is foremost an historical and dialectical science and belongs to the precategorical. Marcuse restricts its utility to a categorical abstraction in the above sense used by Marx, e.g., as a typological differentiation between historical and non-historical being.

20. Cf. "What Is Orthodox Marxism?" in *History and Class Consciousness* (Cambridge, 1975), pp. 1-26.

21. Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man* (Boston, 1968), p. 98.

22. Cf. Russell Jacoby, "Towards a Critique of Automatic Marxism," *Telos* 10 (Winter 1971), p. 138.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Historicity restores the category of totality by restoring the missing unity between social being and social consciousness.

Marcuse's analysis of a modern factory in "On the Problem of the Dialectic" further clarifies the theoretical relationship between historicity and history. A factory, and for that matter all historical objects, can be understood only within the concrete context of the totality of their relations. This does not mean that the factory, or any other historical entity, is first understood as a posited "fact" and then examined in relation to other facts, such as the worker, the owner, the manager, etc. Dialectical comprehension, as Ollman has put it, sees "not relations between things, but things as relations."[23] All the facets of this totality of relations define the factory and determine its essence. There can be no factory *as such*. The factory is only its relations, and it changes as a result of their negativity. Thus, the "history" of a factory "is not just something which comes to pass, something which 'happens to the factory' or happens around it as if the 'factory itself' was not affected by all this. On the contrary, all this takes place in and with the factory itself and constitutes its proper, whole being, its entire reality."[24]

Historicity, therefore, does not suppress but presupposes the dialectic and reorients attention away from the general structure of being back to its determinant forms and to their specific concrete historical conditions. Historicity reinitiates dialectical analysis when it has become the victim of reification: when it has been repressed and forgotten. It comprehends the subject as inexhaustible. The abstract concept of historicity always returns us to the concrete historical dialectic, for it is founded upon it. This is why Marcuse concludes that "Marx was the first to grasp the true historicity of human existence using the only approach appropriate for this purpose. In a much deeper sense, Marx is the heir of German Idealism, because this philosophy was only able to become authentic again on the way to and through the historicity of human existence."[25]

Marcuse's essay on the concept of labor[26] should be interpreted as a continuation of his efforts to identify reified forms of discourse, and not as an attempt to define labor as an ontological category. Because labor exercises a determining influence over each and every aspect of man's being, it is no mere economic activity, for no activity could assume such a comprehensive mediating function. Labor ostensibly is responsible for the production of all material and spiritual spheres of existence in their past, present and future forms. It is the praxis of all modes of being and provides not only for material subsistence and its concomitant expressions of consciousness, but also for the non-economic dimensions of existence. These dimensions are immediately suggested by the very characteristics associated directly with the material production and reproduction of necessary goods. Two such characteristics,

23. Bertell Ollman, *Alienation* (Cambridge, 1975), p. 66.
24. "On the Problem of the Dialectic."
25. *Ibid.*
26. Herbert Marcuse, "On the Philosophical Foundation of the Concept of Labor in Economics," *Telos* 16 (Summer 1973), pp. 9-37.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

duration and *permanence*, can be summarized as factors contributing to the perpetual development of objective conditions whereby human beings can continue to work and to evolve through self-formative and self-creative processes mediated by labor and subject to the historical and dialectical transformations of production. Because duration and permanence are arrived at inevitably through a study of the historicity of necessary labor, they must ultimately appear as essential properties of all labor, while at the same time pointing to a labor constitutive of existence beyond the realm of necessity. Since it is the singular objective of labor to create new modes of existence *and* the conditions whereby such existential formation can transpire, all modes of existence incorporate labor. This is true of the realm of freedom beyond the realm of necessity where, though labor realizes its own negation and its form is radically altered, the content of labor remains unchanged. Then, the possibilities for creating existence are infinitely expanded and freely chosen.

Labor itself, therefore, is not an ontological category as such, but an ontological category of *human existence*. While labor appears as the essence of human existence, both labor and existence must be reduced further still to their determinate forms, for the essence of labor is yet to be grasped. This distinction (between labor as an ontological category and as an ontological category of human existence) immediately differentiates Marcuse's concern with ontology from the preoccupation of traditional theory with ontology. By dissociating labor from ontology, and by properly associating labor and ontology as the former is mediated concretely by human existence, labor and ontology become historical and precategorical. Once again, however, the question must be broached, that if the categorical is dissolved into the precategorical, why bother with ontology? We answer this criticism by briefly turning our attention to Marcuse's express purpose behind his reconsideration of the definition of labor.

Within modern economic theory the methodological *a priori* conceptualization of labor, restricting it to the economic sphere of material production and reproduction, dictates an *a priori* political distinction operative in the social organization of production (which is to say that the definition is operational) between the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity, such that they are presented as two *different* totalities of existence rather than two actual modes of existence within the *same* totality. The restriction of labor to the economic sphere, to the realm of necessity, separates it from the realm of freedom and is reified. Labor can posit nothing as a self-creative act beyond necessity or beyond the artificial expansion of the realm of necessity. In the other direction, the realm of freedom is separated from the activity of self-formative processes. By being opposed to labor, the realm of freedom serves only as a potential basis for a passive and static existence, and it acquires utility either by allowing recuperation for further labor, or by assuming the quality of restricted free time that precedes, accompanies, or supercedes labor. Marcuse underscores the overriding significance of theoretically comprehending the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom as two

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dimensions of experience within a single totality, for only then can we accomplish the practical reintegration of labor and freedom, self-creativity and necessity, such that freedom ingresses into necessity.[27] Thus, Marcuse is reminding us that "praxis in the realm of freedom beyond material production and reproduction demand a circumspection and foresight which is only possible on the basis of a well determined state of existence within the world: a state in which existence can already dispose of what it needs, and has attained a certain distance from the most necessary and immediate things. Only in such a situation can the integrity and fulfillment of being be seen beyond what is present at hand and what must be necessarily provided. *Existence must hold fast to this knowledge in order to be able to develop really freely.*"[28]

To the extent that it is necessary to recall that labor is fundamental to all forms of existence, as it is when labor must be dislodged from its strict identification with economic activity, such discussions presuppose the categorical in opposition to the reified precategorical and the reified categorical. Since Marcuse's categories are eminently historical, as is transparently clear when he submits that "labor is a specifically historical category: a category of human existence,"[29] for "only in labor, and not before, man becomes historical and acquires his determinate position in the historical process,"[30] we are returned to a dialectics of history whence these categories were derived.

27. For an elaboration of this position, cf. *An Essay on Liberation* (Boston, 1969), pp. 18-22.
28. "Concept of Labor," *op.cit.*, p. 35. Italics added.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
30. *Ibid.*

NEW GERMAN CRITIQUE
No. 7 Winter 1975-76

PETER UWE HOHENDAHL: The Use Value of Literary Criticism
RAINER NAEGELE: Aspects of the Reception of Heinrich Böll
MARC ZIMMERMAN: Theoretical Bases of the Marxist-Structuralist Encounter
H.-J. BRAUNS, DAVID KRAMER: Political Repression in West Germany
PAUL PICCONE: From Tragedy to Farce: The Return of Critical Theory
DIETER RICHTER: Reading Attitudes as a Problem in Teaching Literature
HOWARD GADLIN: The Return to Freud? Essay on Jacoby's *Social Amnesia*

Subscription for one year (3 issues): $6 for individuals; $12 for institutions. Foreign subscriptions add $1. Address all correspondence to:

NEW GERMAN CRITIQUE
Box 413, German Department
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Milwaukee, WI 53201.

Back Issues 1-6 still available. Write for more information.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

On the Problem of the Dialectic*

by Herbert Marcuse

I

In the framework of this journal, the full-length acknowledgement and review of a book with pure philosophical intentions[1] is justified by the central position that the dialectic occupies within Marxism, and through the insights which could be obtained if one considers contemporary philosophy from a dialectical perspective relating philosophy to contemporary society, and to the entire socio-historical situation. Moreover, it is not a question of analyzing Marck's examinations of individual systems of modern philosophy, and his reactions to them. Instead, it ought to be asked whether and to what extent the basic problem of the dialectic is developed in these works, and whether a "cross-section of current philosophy, from the viewpoint of the problem of the dialectic," is at all possible. In order to take this approach, we can say with confidence at the outset of the discussion that the particular examinations of Marck's are of a level of accuracy and penetration that is seldom found in modern philosophical history. To whatever extent the systems selected by Marck are so basically different from one another, what distinguishes Marck's book is equal concerns about a true understanding and an approach that does each one justice. In view of the alleged value-free (*standpunktlosen*) "objective" descriptions, for which each method of philosophizing, in a similar manner, is nothing but a disinterested mode of thinking, Marck succeeds because he looks from the very first from the perspective of a real problem at a real problem; from its own perspective and, hence, from the outside, as well. He has given clarity to its inner liveliness and to the paradoxical properties of all the philosophizing considered. This is also the case where the critical presuppositions of Marck's lead down a false path, as in the final chapters of the section on Heidegger. The meaning and intention of Heidegger's philosophy is improperly rendered through the opposition of Existentialism and Platonism, which is as little correct as substituting for the metaphysical notion of being (*Seinsbegriff*) or validity (*Geltung*) a "concept of being derived from being-there." Here, the *a priori* dualism of "ego and existence" (*Ich und Ist*), of validity and existence, turns out to be disastrous for Marck. We shall return to this dualism in whose "uncanceled tension" Marck sees the root of the dialectic.

---

*"Zum Problem der Dialektik," *Die Gesellschaft*, Vol. VII (1930), part 1, and Vol. VIII (1931), part II. Part I was translated by Morton Schoolman. Part II was translated by Duncan Smith. The translators wish to thank Edwin Gora, physicist and sometime social theorist, for his careful reading of the translation of the first part, and for his suggested revisions, many of which have been incorporated.

1. Siegfried Marck, *The Dialectic in Contemporary Philosophy*, 1st Half-volume (Tübingen, 1929).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In the first half-volume Marck presents a treatment of the following philosophers under the heading of "Historical Considerations of the Problem of the Dialectic:" Rickert, Lask, Kroner, (Kierkegaard), Borth, Gogarten, Brunner, Tillich, Lenin, Lukács, Grisebach and Heidegger. J. Cohn, Hönigswald, Bauch, Natorp, N. Hartmann, Cassirer, M. Adler are announced for the second volume, and Scheler, Driesch, Litt, Spranger, W. Stern, and O. Spann are also to be examined. When one considers that Marck proposes no ordinary sketch of contemporary philosophy, but an analysis aiming at a particular problem, the combination of these philosophers is cause for astonishement. Even when one considers that the first volume treats the opponents, and the second volume the advocates of the "critical dialectic"—which is the position and the standard of the author—it is still surprising. What on earth has the inner meaning of the philosophizing of Rickert to do with the religious socialists; what have Heidegger, J. Cohn, Lukács, Natorp, Bauch and Adler to do with each other? What is it about the dialectic that it is able to encompass such breadth and depth? We started from the central position of the dialectic within Marxism—indeed, has all of current philosophy suddenly become Marxist? Or, since we do not believe that it has, what does Marck actually mean here by his use of the term "dialectic?"

Marck is not simply endeavoring to expand the dialectic, but is seeking to broaden the "critical dialectic." He characterizes its meaning as "insight into the irreconcilability of the contradictions in the foundation of philosophies, and as a preservation, not 'negation,' of contradiction resulting from this." The unresolvable tension between the existing subject and the realm of validity, the rejection of the construction of an ideal subject, form an essential element in this sense. It follows that the dialectic belongs, in an as yet unelucidated way, to the basis of philosophy, namely, to the foundation of a particular philosophy, the so-called critical philosophy. Its meaning is "insight," and its dimension "cognition," which lives in the tension between the self and the realm of validity. This tension is preserved in its progress and in its result, and therefore functions, as it were, as a guide and as a means to intuiting itself. So far as it is evident from this first half-volume, in the examination of the philosophical groundwork of the critical philosophy, the *a priori* constitution of the world, included among the realm of validity and which stands opposed to the self, cancels the construction of an ideal subject, that is, what might be pure consciousness or consciousness generally. A sufficient portrayal and analysis of this basis is not possible until its system is further developed in the second half-volume. For our purposes these suggestions can and must suffice. We see in them the direction from which this dialectic emerges, and the area in which the dialectic is at home. The direction is critical philosophy and the area is epistemology, and only on this basis is a dialectic of Being itself, of reality, formulated.

The term dialectic, and its conception, have received such abuse through usage in contemporary philosophy and in Marxist theory and practice that

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the attempt to capture its original meaning has become unavoidable. Philosophy appears to view the dialectic as a panacea through which it is able to escape from the helpless confusion and lifelessness to which it has fallen on its own accord. Philosophy grasps the dialectic in a confused manner as a necessity of contradiction, tension and agitation partly in cognition, partly between cognition and reality, self and world, self and validity, partly within reality itself. It appears that an unequivocal decision as to where the contradiction lies can be avoided; consequently everything is permitted to be incorporated into such a "dialectical system," and everything remains in an unresolved state. —Dialectics is used within Marxism in a similar manner. To some, this development is "only an historical contingency," congealed residue of Hegelianism in Marx and, for that reason, it can, without injury, indeed, with profit, be removed from Marxist theory and practice. To others, it is an essential part of Marxism, but—and this point is decisive—what for Marx was the meaning and essence of historical movement, has become a fetter in the present. Through a faulty dialectic each mistake, each step backward can be justified, and can be claimed as a necessary link in dialectical movement, so that in the end the same thing results as with bourgeois philosophy—decisions are avoided. In view of this, one should either abandon all talk about the dialectic or try again to give it some real meaning. This exercise tries to make a small contribution in this direction.

If we now begin with an examination of Plato, we do this not merely out of a desire to see the manner in which the dialectic has been treated historically, but because we believe that Plato has understood the meaning of the dialectic in its most fundamental sense, and that Hegel, at least in the *Phenomenology of Mind* and in the *Science of Logic*, started from the Platonic tradition when laying the foundation for his dialectic. It does not have to be emphasized that only suggestions can be made here.

When we inquire into the places in which Plato discussed the meaning of the dialectic (as to the proper ordering of Plato's writings, we will use Stenzel's interpretation in his *Studies on the Development of the Platonic Dialectic*, 1917, though we believe that parts stand in need of modification), we shall see that the dialectic is attempting to cope with "true being," being as it is "in reality," truly, contrary to all that is "apparently real," or "not actual being." The dialectic belongs to the highest expression of human knowledge, Reason (eliminating all the more recent rationalistic interpretations as conceptual cognition and to which they have given an inferior epistemological status), to the Logos itself, and as Logos particularly in its Greek double-meaning as Logos of being and as Logos of human discourse which makes true being visible; it is human discourse that makes it appear clearly what each being is in itself (*Republic*, 511 B, 531 to 532). It is a "power" of human reason to see being as it is in "truth" (*ibid.*, 511 B; *Philebus*, 15 D), and is, therefore, by no means an "instrument of cognition" (*Erkenntnismittel*) or methodology which everyone can apply everywhere. In

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the *Philebus* (15 to 16), Plato sharply opposed such abuses of the dialectic. Since for Plato, the multiplicity of the objects of sensual experience and of common sense do not constitute true being,—on the contrary, in the first place, true being consists in hidden "togetherness and unity," which leads to this multiplicity—one needs for the comprehension of true being a dialectical ability. In order to discover the true unity, one has to visualize what belongs together, and what is only apparently dispersed, and on the other hand, one should also separate what appears to be linked together (*Republic*, 531 to 532, 537 C; *Phaedrus*, 265 to 266). To realize true being one needs the dialectical ability because this being itself is given to man as dialectical being. True being is concealed in every untrue dispersal and untrue belonging together, and hence, only in the course of this complex dialectical process is true unity and separation made visible. Senzel has now persuasively demonstrated that in the great dialogues after the *Republic*, particularly in the *Theaetetus, Sophist,* and *Philebus*, the dialectic receives a deepened meaning and with it a more central position in Plato's philosophizing. Beginning with the *Theaetetus*, the dialectic stands in an essential union with the notion of becoming and together they take on a new significance in the Platonic system. "Those things that we say 'are,' are in the process of becoming as a result of movement and change and combining with one another, and it is incorrect to characterize them as being, for none of them ever 'is,' but are always becoming" (*Theaetetus*). And what is still more important is that this movement and unification no longer bestows the property of being only to sensual reality, to "objects that come into being and perish" (*Philebus*, 15 A), but to the Ideas as true being in itself, as well. The uniqueness, insularity, and unambiguous determination of being (the Idea) is replaced by its inherent multiplication, coherence, and ambiguity, in which unity and unambiguous determination are still constituted (*Sophist*, 153 D). This is the central problem: how can the one be many and yet be one (*Philebus*, 16). The realization that all being consists of the one and the many is of such profound importance, that it is compared to the fire of Prometheus that came to mankind as a gift of the Gods (*Ibid.*). —The decisive investigations are not to be misunderstood in the *Sophist*, as though one were to be concerned with a logical, conceptual or judgmental question, or the like. But the *Sophist* is sufficiently clear (234 DE) that we are concerned about the achievement of the being of being itself, about the properties of being of all the objects of reality and the related problem of true and false being, of appearance and truth, of being and non-being. This inquiry culminates in the sentence: "Being is neither movement nor permanence, neither sameness nor difference, but something distinct and different from all that." And since everything exists by being different from everything else, everything must also be different from Being, and in certain ways it is also non-being (non-being is not the opposite of being, but that which amounts to the other and different than being). So according to its nature, to every being belongs its non-being,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

its other-side, and what is different from it (*Sophist*, 256 DE).

Hence, the meaning and function of the dialectic now acquires a deeper justification. It is no longer satisfactory to assign to the dialectical ability the disclosure of true-being in such a way that it discloses the latter from the concealment and from the dispersal of the untrue being of sensual reality and manifests it in its unity, definitiveness, and permanency. Rather, the being of this being itself becomes problematic and with it its relation to sensual reality to which it is no longer opposed as unified and permanent being to a diverse and developing non-being (untrue being). In an enigmatic manner, being has divided into types, which reunite or separate according to their receptive natures, and from this movement and process form new unities of being. This being is neither movement nor permanence, and yet it "is" only in movement and permanence (*Sophist* 250 C). The major objective of the dialectic, as described in the *Sophist*, 253, is directed at having this being achieved in its multiplicity, which is recognized as its characteristic. This is achieved by a very complex procedure of "classification" in terms of the "types" of being. In due course, through more and more narrow classificatory divisions, the sought after unities of being become visible together with their respective non-being.

The basic inquiries on being and the dialectic in the *Sophist* have so far hardly been recognized as fundamental, nor have they been clarified, since their misinterpretation as logical and epistemological inquiries have always presented an obstacle. If they have been used here in such a rough sketch, such a procedure is justified because without some indication of the locus of the problem, it has not been feasible to delimit the original foundation of the dialectic, even if only to show where the dialectic is not. We will now attempt to summarize our findings.

For Plato, the dialectic is an ability (*Wissen, Erkennen, Vermögen*) of human reason that discovers being as it is in its true being. It is not based on human reason or on the relation of reason as knowledge of the "world," but is based in the being of being itself. Every being is in a state of division, ambiguity and movement, while it is in existential relation with other beings, in order to build a new unity of being with some other being. It is only simultaneously with its other side, its non-being, and with all that is different from it, through which it becomes determined and limited. Being is only in this movement, change and multiplicity and is only in them as unity, permanence, and sameness. That is what is meant as dialectical, and for that reason can only be grasped dialectically.

For an understanding of the further development of the problem of the dialectic, it must be stressed that in Plato its decisive significance occurs together with a turning to the problematics of becoming as an essential aspect of reality. The plurality and movement of being is no longer discussed as mere appearance and opposed to the permanent unity of true being (the Ideas), but it is recognized as an essential aspect of being itself and finds its clearest expression in the sentence, that to all being necessarily belongs the existence

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of its other side, of all that is different from it and what is not it, through which everything can be at the very outset determined and limited. Clearly, that which appears in the *Sophist* as the essential relation of the dialectic to the knowledge of being, appears in the *Philebus* as that which has achieved being (*Gewordenheit*). The *Philebus* also acts as a vehicle for discussing the problem of how there can be unified being and yet plurality. It is emphasized that this problematic is to be, more than ever, the central focus of the question of being, if being as unity becomes a problem not only in "coming into being and perishing," but also in the idea of being in itself (*Philebus*, 15 A). We learn from the resolution to this problem that being emerges from unity and multiplicity, and has united determination and non-determination in itself (boundedness and unboundedness) throughout being as such, and not only through the world of sensible reality. The dialectic discovers the unities of being as determinancies, and by perceiving in each being first of all the one comprehensive Idea. And it does not stop there, but it also inquires into the question of into how many new determinancies as unities this original Idea is divided, a process that is relatively infinite because every being carries within its existence its unboundedness (*Philebus* 15-16). Next, there is a general classification of being into three types: determined and bounded being, undetermined and unbounded, and that which arises out of a mixture of them both, that is, undetermined-being becoming determined being (23 ff). The following point is decisive: the latter type of being is designated as proper, true, and essential (*Ousia*), and this true being as having become actual True being "comes into true existence through the measure that the limit introduces" (26 E); it "emerges from the mixture and comes into existence as true being" (27 B). But now, where developed being and movement is included in being itself, completing the entire meaning of the dialectic, this developed being and movement is clearly made visible as the highest level of expression of knowledge. From this dialectic, understood as the dialectic of being, the way is lead to an insight into the historicity of being, on which this plurality and movement is based—an interrelationship that is evident in Hegel—an insight that is nowhere to be found in Plato's writings. His inclusion of the dialectic in his theory of Ideas has made impossible any development surpassing the horizon of the Greek world. This led also to the condemnation of the dialectic as an illusive science wherever the problem of the dialectic has not been developed to the level of historicity. We must skip these developments here and take up the problem of the dialectic where it first enters into the consciousness of philosophy in a new sense—in Hegel.

We now want to show where Hegel took up the dialectic again (and in so doing, we must omit the important point that Kant has proved in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, namely, that dialectics has appeared for so long as appearance without essence, is still appearance, but now of necessity had been rooted in human reason). It is to be noted, to begin with, that for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hegel—as it was for Plato—the dialectic is a cognitive power and a cognitive method, because and insofar as being, which is true reality, is dialectical. "The abstract and unreal is not its (philosophy's) Element, on the contrary, it is the real, i.e., that which establishes itself, that which lives in itself; and its very concept implies its existence. It is the process that creates its own moments and passes through all of them, and the entirety of this movement constitutes its positive element and its truth" (*Phenomenology of Mind*, Georg Lasson edition, p. 31). The dialectical method or the method of philosophy is nothing other than the expression and representation of necessary movability, of necessary coming-into-being of reality itself. Its highest principle is "to surrender to the life of the object" (*Ibid.*, p. 36). The dialectic method frees all being from its apparent rigidity and isolation, it comprehends being as a necessary moment in its totality, as a result of a becoming; it comprehends being in its true essence, with which it achieves insight into the essential evolution of all being, of its essential "boundary," of its negativity and of its merging into a new and "higher" being. The comprehension of reality as a necessary becoming—and not only of reality as a whole, but of each particular, individual reality—views each being as developing out of something else, out of an earlier stage of its existence, and as evolving into something else, something later as "the unity of opposites," and only as such does it really exist. Therefore, for Hegel the origin and basis of the dialectic lies in being itself, and it is—as Hegel continually stresses—not a method, which arrives at the meaning of being through the ego, the knowing subject, it is not simply a means of cognition, but is "nothing different from its objects and contents; for it is its content in itself, the dialectic is its own content, which moves it forward...it is the motion of the thing itself" (*Science of Logic*, Georg Lasson, p. 36).

While each particular reality is comprehended as it has come into being and as it is becoming, as a moment and as a process in its totality, as an outcome "in which essentially that is contained, from which it is resulting" (*Ibid.*), at the same time, the essential historicity of reality is disclosed. If one recognizes the nature of being as historicity with the comprehension of its having come into being and its becoming as the essential being of being, one can then hardly find a truer grasp of historical being than that which already contains its origins within it from which it resulted. Thus the determination of the "substance of the real" as "subject" shows to what extent Hegel has taken seriously this historicity of reality. It will perhaps only be possible to clarify those difficult to understand and often misinterpreted starting points of proper being of the (absolute) substance as subject, if we understand that only being of the same nature as subject (for which being is being for itself and which has knowledge about itself and about being and self) can be essentially historical being. But this essential historicity of the "absolute and concrete individual" is emphatically expressed in just this relationship: "Because the substance of the individual mind, indeed, because the universal mind has had

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the patience to pass through these forms (that is, the forms of reality) in the long extension of time, and to take over the tremendous labor of world history in which this mind has given shape to its whole potential content, and since in no less a fashion could that universal mind ever become conscious of its own nature, thus the individual mind is able . . . with no less effort, to understand its own substance" (*Phenomenology of Mind,* Georg Lasson edition, p. 20). These comments must suffice in order that we can now add: as the origin of the dialectic lies in being, in reality itself, the foundation of the dialectic lies in the historicity of being, of reality. Only because and insofar as the real is historical, it is dialectical; the real can and must be understood through the dialectical method.

We now ask what is meant by the dialectic as a determination of the essence of historical being and to what extent the designation of such being as dialectical is a true characterization of its real being. And secondly, can all being, or, if not, which being, can and should be understood as historical and thus understood as dialectical? Both questions lead beyond the framework of Hegelian philosophy, on the one hand to the resumption of the problem of the dialectic in Marx, and on the other hand to the general formulation of the problem.

With respect to the first question, what is meant when we designate historical-being as dialectical? As an answer we always hear something about opposition and unity, recognition and preservation of contradiction, of movement and thesis, and thesis and synthesis, among other things, but in no way has it been understood what all this has to do with the historicity of the real and why it has anything to do with it. The revolutionary significance of such a determination remains in the dark, and it does not help to appeal to Marx, as long as the original meaning of the dialectic in Marx has not been grasped. Let us now explore the undisputed reality of a concrete historical-being in order to find, from here on, an approach to its "dialectic."

Let us look at the large scale establishment of a modern factory. To begin with, it appears that the existence of this factory is an entirely undisputed fact. It is "the same" for everyone who sees it and sets foot on it, not only in its totality, but also in its machinery, workers, parts of buildings, and so forth. But when I really see the factory in its parts and the people in it, I should then know what they "mean," what the factory, machine, worker, generally is and ought to be, what is their significance and purpose. If I do not know these things (this knowing is, of course, usually totally "unconscious," an unnoticed, "habitual knowledge"), I do not see a factory, machinery, workers, and so forth, but only an accumulation of stones, iron, people, etc. Of all this I do not really know what actually is, and what it is supposed to mean. When we realize that all this familiar and well-known meaning is simultaneously experienced and seen in our everyday process of vision, that without this we would not see, then suddenly the unequivocal givenness of such an object becomes doubtful. Is the factory really the same for those

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

employed in it as workers, for its owners, for the idle traveler who happens upon it, and for the architect who built it? Or is it not each time the same and yet something quite different. Considered from one perspective it is an organization of labor imposed by social conditions, a place that one enters reluctantly and leaves wearily; from the point of view of the owner it is a source of great profit, trying and exciting, yet warmly welcomed and not willingly missed; in the eyes of the traveler the factory is, perhaps, a disfigurement of beautiful scenery, alien, and at the most, somewhat sinister; while for the architect, it is a work of art that has been erected with the means and design of modern architecture, and which can make its builder famous. And when we extend the scope of our considerations, how different is a factory for the economy of a people, for the competitive struggle of the great trusts, for the livelihood of the small merchant and dealer, for the industrial establishment of the neighboring state! No objections should be made to the effect that all such observations are "subjective," and that they have nothing to do with the factory, as such. Such objections emerge from preconceived theories which do not face the real complete concrete object. One should attempt first to eliminate all these moments from the object and see what remains. Certainly, not a factory in the sense of meaning that which is always implied in the pure concrete manner of approach not falsified by theory. Rather, such objects exist only in the totality of their different meanings, and to their respective being belongs a continuous tradition, a coming into being of long duration, which has placed them within an extended living-space and world-space and in which they likewise undergo further continuous development, determined by it (referring to *Lebensraum und Weltraum*) and determining it in steady alteration. And besides this multiple movement and determination, such objects show a strange ambiguity and may even show many faces. Their reality and their effect on human existence, within their space and time is such that this being splits up into contradictions which have their causes in themselves. To outline these contradictions: human existence evaluates its reality as positive or negative, as being either decadent or future oriented; it uses this reality to shape its existence or it fights it or faces it indifferently. And this multiple motion toward the objects propels them to constant change. The factory is enlarged or shuts down or is paralyzed by a strike; it is bought-out, renovated and modernized, a technical or chemical discovery revolutionizes its operation, interest groups struggle about it and within it, and so forth. And all this is not something which just comes to pass, something which "happens to the factory" or happens around it as if the "factory itself" was not affected by all this. On the contrary, all this takes place in and with the factory itself and constitutes its proper, whole being, its entire reality. To comprehend an historical object completely in its concrete reality, one has to grasp the totality of events. Such a comprehension is impossible if the historical object is considered rigid and isolated from its historical context, and treated as an identity free of contradictions "throughout

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

time," instead of seeing it as a many-faced coming into being, acting and passing away in time. Not only its positive moments should be brought into view, but also its negative moments which equally belong to it—what the historical object has been—and what it is becoming, and what it is not contributes to its reality, since this is what determines it and moves it. These remarks are intended only to suggest the situations where the dialectic of history can become visible, and by no means do they exhaust the possibilities for analysis in any direction. Instead, they only suggest directions for which one still has to search. They much has, perhaps, become clear: whenever the historical object from the very first is designated as a "unity of opposition," or is even incorporated within the scheme of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, such a method does violence to the entirety of the historically given fact. None of these procedures are implied by the original meaning of the dialectic, but appear only at a much later time. By no means does each historical object stand, from the very beginning, in such a two-fold (unity of opposition) or three-fold (thesis, antithesis, synthesis) relationship. Such an arrangement can only be achieved by grasping a comprehensive historical totality (periods, evolutionary stages), and therefore already presupposes dialectics and dialectical insight.

We now come to the second question: which objects, according to the nature of their being, are historical and hence dialectical, or do all objects, indeed, the totality of reality, have to be included? Hegel decided on the latter view, and it is evident, in light of his system, that such an absolutizing of historicity or historicizing of the absolute also modifies the essence of historicity as the essence of reality in favor of a streamlined construction. When we now attempt to answer the question about the domain of historicity in a positive way, it must be said that such an answer necessarily presupposes further inquiries into ontology, and we must mention, at least, the results of the inquiry here. But the shortcoming can be rectified by pointing out the rather basic treatment of this problematic by Dilthey (especially in his correspondence with Count Yorck von Wartenburg) and more recently by Heidegger (*Being and Time*, 1927).

Only human existence and all the objects comprehended, formed, created and animated by "being-there" (*Dasein*) in its Existence, are historical according to their being. Hence, their full being, their whole reality exists only as historicity and in history. Such are the respective life-styles and forms of life in their complete range—all their creations, deeds and learning, but also nature as an occupied living space and as a power to be used. The non-historical are according to their essence the objects of the mathematical and physical sciences (objects whose existence is constituted in abstraction from their relatedness to human existence), and not just nature as an object of physics, but also as far as its nature derives from human nature (as is the case, for example, in our "experience of nature"). The dividing line between that which is considered historical and non-historical being is thus ontological. Such objects can become historical or non-historical, even human existence,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

except that the latter is possible only on the basis of a completely determined negation of reality which results in an unreality, since the existence of man is primarily historical. In the proper sense only human existence can be called historical since knowledge of one's own existence and a knowing (not cognitive) attitude toward reality belong to true historical being.

It now becomes clear how things took a new turn on the path from Hegel to Marx. When Marx stood the Hegelian dialectic on its feet, this was no mere correction of a part of Hegelian philosophy, no mere emphasis or appropriation of method, no materialist reinterpretation, but the return of the dialectic to its proper domain and, hence, the scientific discovery of the true dimension of history which now, since the dialectic had been rediscovered, could be grasped in its basic structure. Marx was the first to grasp the true historicity of human existence using the only approach appropriate for this purpose. In a much deeper sense, Marx is the heir of German Idealism *because this philosophy was only able to become authentic again on the way* to and through the historicity of human existence.

These results can be summarized in the theses which follow. The theses are by no means proved in the text above, but are only meant as a guide for further discussion of the problem:

1. The dialectic is not an established method or form of cognition in some philosophical or sociological theory, nor is it a means towards cognition, but it is a designation for aspects of being within being itself. Only because and insofar as these aspects of being within being are dialectical, an investigation arriving toward them and only such an investigation can be understood as dialectical.

2. Dialectical being is historical being. Not all being is dialectical.

3. Only true historical being is in the proper sense dialectical: human existence in its reality, in its events, within the world as it is conceived and formed.

4. The dialectic is never a tension or opposition between the human ego and a world of being which faces it, a world of "superbeing" (God) or ultimate authority, since such an interpretation gets out of touch with the original formulation of the dialectic, in its very beginnings. It confronts concrete (historical) human existence, which has been isolated in advance, with a world which is non-historical in its very nature (therefore the completeness of the world is artificially ruptured, in order to be bound together again afterward into a unity and tension).

If these theses apply to the original position and meaning of the dialectic, the following theses concern its concretization in the unfolding of man's existence in history itself and hence its "application." The original unity of theory and practice becomes visible, which Marx again had first conceived of in the dialectic.

5. Since the dialectic is founded in historicity and since only the human being is truly historical and indeed exists only as a concrete historical situation

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

—that is, a situation determined by a concrete historical situation—the dialectic can thus find its fullest meaning only in the concrete historical situation of human existence (historical in the proper sense of the term). It becomes a concrete dialectic.

6. The concrete dialectic is concerned with the events of man's existence as an aspect of being within human existence. By no means are all events occurring in history to be grasped dialectically and termed dialectical, but the term applies only to those actions and events that are concerned with historical being in its very essence (the greatest misunderstanding is practiced here).

7. Insofar as the concrete dialectic exhibits the multiple divisions, development, and delimitations of the historical mode and form of being, it implies respective attitudes towards these modes and forms of being and its reality. And insofar as each historical reality as reality must assert and bear the claim to stability and constancy, unequivocality and validity, dialectical analysis must be critical and must undermine such claims. Concrete dialectics as an objective value-free science is an absurdity.

Let us return now to Siegfried Marck's book. An examination making so little clear and in which much remains hidden and concealed in a problem as important as that of the dialectic must give at least a provisional determination of what it means by the dialectic. It will not do to refer to the second volume where the historical view, "from the viewpoint of the problem of the dialectic," will provide the necessary groundwork for the meaning of the dialectic. Let us look at the brief suggestions from the relevant sections of the first volume where the meaning of the dialectic is preliminarily considered. If we take the preceding considerations into account, we can then say:

Marck searches for the position of the dialectic in philosophy or more exactly in the "foundations of philosophy," and from here on sees the dialectic as a tension between the ego and existence, cognition and reality. The presupposition of such a determination has already been briefly touched upon. It is, of course, possible to arrive at a meaning of the dialectic from philosophical foundations and thereupon to examine various forms of philosophizing, but such examinations should focus on those philosophies whose intent is the demonstration of historicity, in the sense suggested above. For such examinations a number of current philosophies that Marck treated in the first volume can be discarded. For example, the "anti-dialectical criticism" of Rickert and Lask, the theological philosophies and E. Grisebach. The extent to which history and historicity "occur" in these philosophies is not decisive (though this is the case in Rickert, to be sure, to a considerable extent); it is decisive only if the inner meaning of the philosophizing is oriented towards history and historicity. But this question must be answered in the negative. Perhaps one should also do this with Heidegger, where the entire existential analytic in the first part of *Being and Time* is interpreted by Marck only as a starting point for the elaboration of fundamental ontology

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and metaphysics (an interpretation that Heidegger himself appears to have adopted after the new publications of *Essence of Reasons*, 1929, and *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* in the same year).

All these questions go unanswered here, since they can only be clarified within the framework of philosophical discussion. It is our intention now only to consider Marck's critique of Lukács, which brings the problem back to Marxist ground. Here, finally, a long-standing and gross injustice is compensated, for Lukács' book, *History and Class Consciousness*, is scrutinized and appreciated in its essential and not to be overestimated significance for the development of Marxism. Marck puts an end to that primitive "critique" that believes Lukács' analysis can be dispensed with by calling it "metaphysics," and which has been reiterated in the worst way by communist authors. His critique pinpoints the weak point in Lukacs' dialectic: the concept of "correct class consciousness." This notion is (as the conception of class consciousness has been on the whole) a violation of the dimension of historicity, a fixation "outside" of what happens from whence an artificially abstract connection with history must be produced. It appears to us that Marck's objection to Lukács' treatment of the "problems of nature and value" is not correct (131ff). In particular, Lukács' polemic against Engels (whose false conception of the mathematical-physical sciences as "dialectical" became evident by the lack of sound foundations through the published parts of the *Dialectics of Nature*) shows that Lukács has seen very clearly the dichotomy of nature, which is quite unhistorical in physics, but then again historical in providing the living space of human existence. He certainly does not conceive of nature "only as a product of society." Finally, Marck objects to the establishment of a "value-transcendence" by Lukács, but this notion does not affect the meaning of Lukács' book which is not concerned with philosophical foundations, but aspires to a concrete dialectic.

After these critical observations, the great value of Marck's book must once again be emphasized. We see its value not only in the aforementioned accuracy and depth of particular analyses, but in the internal loosening-up of current philosophy in its true problematics which is exemplified by Marck, and in spite of all reservations, its validity and actuality and proximity to life is brought to the foreground. Hence, Marck's book can become the source of fruitful Marxist discussions by showing that contemporary philosophy stands somewhere other than where both old and new Marxist theory has looked to find it, and that a dialogue with this philosophy is no "mock fight," but a necessity for the Marxist in particular.

II

The criticism of the second half-volume of Marck's work[2] must pass over the

2. Siegfried Marck, *The Dialectic in Contemporary Philosophy*. 2nd Half-Volume (Tubingen, 1931, Mohr). Comparison with 1st Half-volume.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

very lively and penetrating depiction of the various "dialectical" movements in contemporary philosophy even more than it did with regard to the first volume. Criticism must instead be limited to Marck's "systematic explanations of the concept of the critical dialectic." The controversy over the Hegelian dialectic is the central issue of these explanations. The concept of the "critical" dialectic—which Marck sees as the single "genuine" dialectic—is derived positively by differentiation from the "speculative" dialectic of Hegel.

"The connection to Hegel is immanent in any work on dialectics." This is true in a most decisive sense insofar as the Hegelian dialectic is not a flexible and arbitrarily variable methodology but is inseparably rooted in Hegel's whole metaphysics. Marck clearly articulates the consequences of this position —it is only possible to accept or reject this dialectic as such (89). The question still remains, however, whether and how a non-Hegelian dialectic is possible. Marck affirms such a possibility. Indeed, he is convinced of the "superiority" of the critical dialectic over every form of metaphysics. We shall attempt to show, however, that Marck returns this critical dialectic in the course of his investigation precisely in its positive determinations right back to the basis of the Hegelian dialectic (which he rejects) by substantiating his position by means of a metamorphosis of the speculative dialectic. In this way Marck himself undermines his thesis that there are a "multitude of dialectical methodologies" and a variety of "dialectical positions" (88ff). Our criticism is intended to show how far such a limiting metamorphosis of the Hegelian dialectic discloses new and fruitful philosophical problems or reveals old problems in a new light.

Marck wishes to posit "the unacceptable aspects of the Hegelian dialectic and oppose the positive aspects to them as a determination of the concept of the critical dialectic" (95). These unacceptable aspects are for him (1) the "complete fusion of consciousness and object" and therefore also the comprehension of the object into a "process" through which its structure becomes identical with the structure of the ego (the consciousness; (2) the progress from finite to infinite consciousness, the dissolution of the finite spirit in the infinite spirit (Hegel's central conception of the "absolute"); (3) the neutralizing power of negation, particularly the neutralizing power of the human ego, of self-consciousness (95 ff, 5 ff). All these aspects have an internal connection. A rejection of them results in an actual undermining of the whole foundation of the Hegelian dialectic. Marck would then have to prepare a new foundation for the critical dialectic. First let us see how he establishes the unacceptability of these aspects.

Marck sees the two major theses of Hegelian metaphysics as the "fusion" of consciousness and object, and "the transition from finite to infinite reason." These aspects rest only on the "mystical-pantheistic conviction" as to the unity of spirit and world, God and Man, a conviction which can only be directly believed or intuitively grasped (91). But if these theses are only "the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

expression of mystical conviction," then there is strictly speaking no philosophical controversy about them. Such a conviction precedes any speculative proof and any mediation. This conviction "is posited before the first step in thinking begins" (91). It is preceded not in the sense of an objective basic tenet (hypothesis), the pertinence of which is then set forth by philosophical investigation and not in the sense of "self-sustaining evidence requiring no further proof" (95). Instead, it is preceded in the sense of its "inability to be accomplished with the aid of the mystery" (94).

No matter how essential it is to reveal Hegel's philosophy as coming from completely different sources opposed to the loose talk of rationalism and Panlogism, it still threatens to destroy the basis of any controversy with Hegel to refer it back to a "mystery." Such a procedure cannot be justified even apart from this consideration. It is true that Hegel's philosophy was fed by religious sources which maintained their strength even into the last systematic explanations. But they flowed into the purely systematic explanations and were treated on the philosophical level. They do not rescind the need for a purely philosophical discussion. The later philosophical conceptuality is visible already in Hegel's early theological writings. Far more than being a mystical conviction, it is a most penetrating debate with the metaphysics of antiquity—particularly the Aristotelian metaphysic—which gives the system its inner form. I have attempted to work out these connections by an interpretation of the *Phenomenology of Mind* and the *Science of Logic*. These articles will soon be published, but here I can only furnish some of my conclusions.

Neither the unity of consciousness and object, the comprehension of the substance as subject, nor the positing of an absolute reason of which human consciousness and its object are only manifestations of existence, grows out of a mystical-pantheistic conviction. They were discovered instead by the difficult path of pure philosophical investigations; most particularly by the specifically Hegelian questioning about the meaning of Being at all. These concepts are not preconceived axioms. They are instead the result of investigations pointing toward them as conclusions. Hegel is oriented in working out metaphysical questions (about the meaning of Being) on the Kantian problem of the achievement of the *ego cogito* which allows for all objective Being. (The transcendental synthesis is the one source of the Hegelian dialectic.) He is also oriented toward the basic discoveries of the metaphysics of antiquity, particularly upon the determination of Being as motion (the conceptual comprehension of motion as the basic character of Being is a second source of the Hegelian dialectic). Both orientations meet in the concept of Being basic to the *Phenomenology of Mind* toward which Hegel worked in his early theological writings. The original proof of the unity of consciousness and object, of the subject-character of substance and of reason as the actual Being of Being is completed in an exposition of the Being of life and its occurrence in the world. The original basis of the Hegelian

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dialectic is the Being of life and its specific moment.

The "highest point" of Kantian philosophy, the "original synthetic unity" of the *ego cogito* (which is the achievement of its thinking being), permitting the generation of objectivity and the knowledge of the central definition of Being as movement, have all become concrete in the concept of life. From this position Hegel also formulates the concept by which he intends to comprehend the essence of Being: that concept is "self-identification in other Being." Located in movement, all being is yet not soluble in movement. It preserves itself in the various contradictions of its movement as one and the same thing. This oneness and sameness which create that which the Being really is, originate only in this self-preservation in movement. The being becomes different respectively in its existence and is always different there than it is "in itself." These differences, wherein it coincides with others, affected by them and in turn affecting them, belong to its own being. Only here in these differences does it receive itself and behave as a self. Only here does it fulfill its essence in otherness.

These very rough suggestions are intended to give preliminary access to the manner in which Hegel came to the formulation of the concept of being as "self identification in other being." This formulation is one which already contains in germinal form the basic meaning of the dialectic, which presumes in an absolute sense that concept of being and reveals the most formal and general basis of the "identity" of consciousness and object. This is true insofar as the structure of the "self identification in other being" determines both the nature of the consciousness and the object being and addresses both types of being as the same type of movement. But this self identification in other being is only the most general and most formal determination of being. This concept receives its actual meaning only when Hegel proves that all forms of being are concrete forms of this self identification. They are accordingly concrete forms of self-behavior in movement. For the sake of this proof life is presumed to be that being which most fulfills the posited meaning of all being and can therefore have validity as absolute being. The formula for this in the early theological writings was "pure life is being" (303). The living is in a most particular meaning identical to itself in the various conditions of its state of living insofar as it produces, preserves, and continues itself as this unity. It represents therefore the most interior and at the same time most actual selfness in movement. And life achieves this kind of unity and selfness essentially as knowing being, as "consciousness." It achieves it by having before itself the various conditions of its aliveness and of its world which affects it as I or Ego. It does not simply dissolve in these conditions but from these conditions it reflects onto its ego (*ichhaftes Selbst*) and is thereby able to behave as actual self. (Hegel's concept of "consciousness" is from the outset to be understood so broadly that it can embrace the entire basic behavior of life. It means above all not mere thinking, knowing, etc., but a concrete manner of existence which includes both practical and theoretical behavior, i.e.,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

thinking and acting.)

The unity of the Kantian I-think experiences in this way a decisive new meaning. The "highest point" of philosophy is now no longer that transcendental "pure consciousness" through the recognition of which the world first becomes recognizable. Instead it is the Being of life, through whose occurence the world first becomes alive. The "other" of all objectivity against which and for which the initial being becomes objective, is in Kant the transcendental self-consciousness of concrete life. The path is thus proclaimed by which the living synthesis of the being which is in itself dialectic emerges from the transcendental synthesis of pure thought. The dialectical unity of being is the "positive" unity (posited in and by itself) of personal (*ichhaft*) substance, and this of course is the result of the concrete occurrence of aliveness. It is always merely a result of a constant negation of the other being, in which life at times finds itself.

Hegel develops this dialectical movement of life in the *Phenomenology of Mind*, but not in the sense of a "philosophy of life," philosophy of history, or the like. Rather his intention is the establishment of metaphysics. Whenever Hegel posits the being of life as unity of life and world, consciousness and object (in the phraseology of Marck "Ego and existence [*Ich und Ist*]) this is the thoroughly material orientation on an obvious "basic phenomenon." Hegel bases the knowable unity of consciousness and objectivity on the living unity of Ego and the world. It is not a total melting together but a union which by no means excludes the "correlation" (i.e., differentness) of the unified (95) but which instead always causes it to endure. This is evident from the fact that Hegel considers "consciousness" by its essential nature to demand an opposing Being-for-consciousness! Consciousness is only possible by opposition to "another" being which is objective for it. A total merger of consciousness and object would remove by the concept of objectivity the concept of consciousness as well! Hegel himself has thus already corrected this aspect which was unacceptable to Marck and moved him to attempt a correction of the Hegelian dialectic.

It is possible to understand how life can enter into the "middle" of being and can be valued as the fulfillment of the meaning of being only if one is clear about the fact that Hegel understood the being of life as *knowing* being (*wissendes Sein*), even as "Self-consciousness." By this means Hegel integrates the Kantian discovery of the *a priori* constitution of the world into self consciousness and follows it to its most extreme consequences. The necessity of an orientation of the life concept on human life (in which consciousness first becomes self-consciousness) and on the "rationality" of the I is contained in this position. These aspects cannot be gone into here. But the sources of these determinations which result from the life concept cannot be too sharply emphasized for the understanding of the positing of substance as reason. On pages 134-140 of the *Phenomenology*[3] Hegel gives the general definitions of

3. Original edition of *The Works*, i.e., Glockner's Jubilaum edition, volume 2.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

life as "general medium" and omni-present "substance" of being. The following sections of the work are basically only an exposition and concretizing of these definitions. The exposition begins with the unmediated existence of life in the world which it is given directly. The occurrence of life has the inner meaning of discovering and comprehending this world as "its own." It comprehends and takes possession of it as its own accidental existence more or less akin to its possibilities and therefore comprehendable as its own "other being." The necessity of life lies in its mediating the world of its immediate existence with its essence, in removing its otherness and uniting it with its own actual being. The relationship between "mastery and servitude" and "greed and work" is the first means by which the union of ego and world, consciousness and object is fulfilled. The first vitalization of the world takes place in the occurrence of this union, the first realization of life as universality. Master and slave relationship is the first incomplete and untrue form in which the individuals opposing each other in a life and death struggle come together in a first universality. The objective being is seized and subjected by living self consciousness through greed and work and absorbed into the universality of life.

It is already clear from the discussion of this immediate manner of the unfolding of life what is meant by the definition of life as "universal medium." Life is universal medium of being insofar as all being becomes apparent and real only through the mediation of living self consciousness. And life is omnipresent substance insofar as the being only really exists in this mediation with life. The living self consciousness is that through which and in which all being first becomes full "actuality," the omnipresence of which first makes extant the being actual as actual being.

In the further development of the *Phenomenology* Hegel shows how life actualizes itself from the unmediated and incomplete to the true and complete forms of its universality and substantiality. The definition of knowing which is certain of itself in its truth is here decisive: it is the definition of "reason." Life can represent true universality and substantiality only as rational subjectivity. Only when it constantly knows of itself and its otherness, only when it lives perpetually from this knowing, can it really remain like itself in its movement (in its "falling" into otherness). And in this self-identity it can knowingly mediate all being with itself.

If life has actualized itself as rational subjectivity and has effected the world as its actuality, the "spirit" is realized as substance of being. In the *Phenomenology* the spirit concept arises out of the life concept. Spirit is articulated as actual being of substance only on this foundation. This situation remains despite Hegel's assessment in anticipation of the fulfillment of all being in the spirit, of the various types of being as types of spirit which are more or less true and thus he makes spirit a true being already at the basis of all being, hence an absolute. This is not mutually contradictory, for this spirit which is at the basis of all being as truth actualizes and reveals itself first

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and only in the occurrence of life, in living self-consciousness. Despite the fact that Hegel posits all types of being from the outset of his philosophy as types of absolute spirit, this is not an undebated basic assumption but a result which follows necessarily from the entire conception of the problem of being and is verified by the research itself.

But this fact is not changed by the interpretation of actual being as "spirit." The "transition from infinite to absolute reason..." has become "unavoidable," and the finite consciousness of human beings is unified with the infinite consciousness (of God) (90). Hegel's dialectic is, of course, an "absolute" dialectic insofar as it intends to represent essence and motion of the being in itself and for itself and not for "our thinking:" "the truth, as it is in and of itself without disguise" (Hegel's introduction to the *Logic*). Marck sees in this absolutizing of finite thought a second unacceptable aspect of Hegel's dialectic. "The inner experience of the finite Ego, the certainty of our thought, on which the critical dialectic, as opposed to the speculative, must rely, stands opposed to the speculative desire for the process of the finite consciousness to the infinite" (95).

But with his reference to the experience of the finite I, Marck faces the task of establishing a new foundation of the dialectic which no longer can be achieved by mere corrections: in fact it cannot be achieved by an orientation, —not even by a negative one, —on the absolute dialectic of Hegel. Let us now observe the positive definitions which Marck makes of the critical dialectic to see whether these lead to a new foundation of the dialectic or whether they already are present in Hegel's version.

The positive definition of the critical dialectic in possible "systematic unity" brings together again motifs which Marck himself refers to only as "Modifications of the dialectical method." "The dialectic of self-consciousness is preserved" in the critical dialectic "together with the dialectic of the process of cognition, the dialectical motif in all totality thinking (*Ganzheitsdenken*) and the dialectical function of the passage through contradiction for the thought result achieved"(96). Both the latter aspects refer back to the first: "the dialectic of self-consciousness is central to the critical dialectic" (97). In what sense is the being of self consciousness for Marck the basis and center of the dialectic?

Marck answers this question by refering to the major thesis of Honigswald's *Psychology of Thought*. For Marck this is "in a real sense critical dialectic" (16). We are dealing here only with the results of the psychology of thought which Marck has incorporated into his work and which are supposed to provide a proof of the critical dialectic.

Consciousness and being, "experience and object" exist in essentially correlative relationships to each other, the "law" of which relationships is determined by their character as "meaning." "In meaning the abstract concepts of object and Ego are both overcome. Meaning is supposed to make apparent the Ego in existence, the existence in Ego (21). Object is in itself in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the possibility of being experienced: as content of an experience it is to mean something and in this meaning it is to be understood by the experiencing Ego. On the other hand the experiencing Ego is of itself a possible object of cognition and comprehendable as meaning. "The whole concept can be summarized in the formula which says that in the Ego existence is represented as the known; in existence Ego is represented as the possibility of knowing the object" (23).

The Ego and the object are thus for Marck tied together as a unity, which is not, as in Hegel, "total merging" but "at the same time separation." The object always remains a "Standing-against." The Ego always remains the "otherness" of the object. "The basic difference between metaphysical and critical dialectic remains that between real-absolute and potential-relative unity. The object is not experience, but experienceable, the experience is not object, but it can be objectified" (25). These relationships thus remain "full of tension." Their parts are "twisted together in a heterogeneous medium." And all essential relationships, like that between "temporal and atemporal" (temporally determined Ego and in itself atemporal truth) are based on this dialectical basic relationship between Ego and object. "The basic relationships of philosophy are thus always those in a heterogeneous medium" (25). They must appear, therefore, as dialectical in themselves and so be understood.

This "dialectic of self-consciousness" holds fast the finiteness of "our thinking" insofar as it is based on the given, negateable by no power of the concept, and on the otherness of the object *vis-à-vis* the Ego. Referring to this, Marck correctly emphasizes that the critical dialectic must drop from the Hegelian concept of "Negation" that aspect "which affirms negation of the negation" (6). "Our Ego cannot negate, it remains tied to reality, to the present" (12). But it must be emphasized that this theory of the finite self-consciousness does not go beyond a theory of the relationships between the Ego and the object primarily as relationships of cognition. That is perfectly in accord with the frame of the psychology of thought. The concept of meaning and of experience is—even if substantially deepened *vis-à-vis* traditional psychology—still left to the realm of the knowing Ego. The full being of the Ego (as Hegel had incorporated it into the concept of being of life) is not brought into this establishment of first principles. This dialectic of self-consciousness remains, therefore, a dialectic of cognition even when it strives for a "rebuilding of psychological principles" (17), or when it attempts to achieve a "general philosophical doctrine of principles" (20). And both other aspects, "The dialectical motif in all totality thinking" and the "passage through the contradiction," by which Marck intends to delimit the critical dialectic, formulate only the most general determinations of cognitive thought.

But the question must be asked, whether validating such determinations of cognition with the term "dialectic" is justifiable from the history of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

problem, if on the other hand—as Marck emphasized in the preface—"dialectic" is to retain the principle sense of a philosophical "basic method." The dialectic as "basic method" cannot be removed from its deepseated historical problematic premises without those premises being incorporated into the new fundamental positions. Perhaps the decisive historical problematic premises of the dialectic lie precisely in that which leads beyond the realm of knowing thought—into "metaphysics!"

These kinds of unavoidable premises were hinted at already in the critique of the first half-volume during our discussion of Plato, Kant, and Hegel. A new basic principle can be attached to each state of the historical problematic of the dialectic signified by these names. It seems initially as if Marck were selecting the Kantian dialectic as the starting point for the critical dialectic. But precisely that problem matrix into which Kant placed the transcendental dialectic of "pure reason" is not basic to Marck's dialectic of self-consciousness. It is not, for him, a question of the dialectic as "transcendental appearance," as a "natural and unavoidable *illusion* of human reason" (*Critique of Pure Reason* B 354). It is not the transcendental dialectic which Marck selects from the realm of Kantian criticism but the transcendental analysis, conceived as a basic foundation of cognitive thought (the finite Ego).

But in our opinion the historical problematic premises do not justify treating this as "dialectic," especially not if one rejects—as Marck correctly does—a "separation of the systematic and the historical," and proposes a "historical-problematic" work (III). Seen from the perspective of historical problematics the dialectic is not established by the "potential relative unity" of knowing Ego and knowable object, not by the passage of cognition through contradiction, not by the knowable synthesis of unity and diversity. But the synthetic unity of this self-consciousness can indeed provide such a proof. Marck formulates historically correctly the thesis "the dialectic arises in the Ego and returns to the Ego" (II). But this is true only when the self-consciousness (I) is made the origin of the dialectic not only in its position as knowing thought, but—as in Hegel—in its *full* Being at one with the full being of the "world" which is object to it. This is intended to help clarify the following remarks on the historical problematic of the dialectic. These remarks are also intended to provide a clarification and completion of the theses presented in the first essay.

The origin of the problem of the dialectic within the metaphysics of antiquity[4] can be summarized briefly in the following remarks.

With regard to the question as to what comprises the essence of being (that which it is as opposed to the plurality of its appearances in the changing diversity of coming into being and passing-away), the investigation comes up against the circumstance that this "true" Being of being itself contains a

4. Stenzel's article and, particularly the first chapter of Gadamer's book, *Plato's Dialectical Ethic* (Leipzig, 1931), both mentioned in the first essay, are relevant here.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

multiplicity in its unity. It has varied relationships with other being, and these relationships are not accidental and superficial but precisely establish its essence. The being of each being is only together with that which it is not and which is an other. It is only together with its not-being and other being and can only be grasped in the passage through that which is not and other. But this circumstance only becomes "dialectical" and demands a "dialectic" as access to it ("method") expressed through the following "theses" that for the philosophy of antiquity were already contained in it as premises.

1. The truth of being is discovered and preserved by human speech (Logos, *legein*).

2. Human speech is essentially talking with another about something; only in discussion (*durchreden*) with another can it fulfill its discovery and preservation function.

3. The essence of being discovered and preserved in human speech is supposed in its truth to be available and affable for human life and its occurrence. The human being has to have and to understand the essence and the truth of being both for the production of things and for the ability to find one's way, and for the confrontation with nature.

It follows from these aspects that the philosophical inquiry has not reached an end with the determination of the above outlined circumstance but only attained to its beginning. It only becomes a dialectic and therefore a genuine access route to the essence of being when it has made this circumstance realizable in all its "parts" and in its respective concretization for human speaking-with-each-other and therefore secure in its availability. This results in the demand to return the unity of the essence—diverse in itself—to its last no longer variable basis and secondly to allow this last basis to unfold itself into the multiplicity of the being established by it; to preserve the genesis of this multiplicity in its individual "countable" stages. Only then when on the one hand the last basis of being is recognized and on the other hand the multiplicity arisen from this basis has become "countable" in all its parts, are the pre-conditions given for an availability and preservation of the discovered truth in human life.

We can derive from this the following premises for the historical-problematic origin of the dialectic:

1. The dialectic arises only in mediated sense from the Ego insofar as its immediate first origin lies in a particular circumstance of the essence of being itself and in the resulting necessity for human life to come to terms with and to confront this pre-formed state of affairs.

2. This "Ego" of human life, to which the dialectic thus "returns," is not primarily cognitive thought but the full being of life occuring in the world. The necessity of the dialectic lies in the necessity of this life to be able safely to control the essence of being in all life situations. The "dialectic of the self-consciousness" is not a free floating dialectic of cognition but tied to the concrete being and action of human life.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

3. The synthesis of unity and multiplicity, of being and otherbeing, which is brought about in the dialectic is not just any synthesis of cognition. Above all it does not lie in the dimension of diverse appearances, of coming into being and passing away, but concerns the essence of being (the "idea") even in its possible relation to human life which in speaking-with-each-other discovers and makes available this essence.

In the limits of this essay we cannot show how the decisive motifs of the dialectic of antiquity return in Hegel to a changed basis determined by Kantian philosophy. We single out instead only one motif in which all the others are based, and from which the radical transmutation of the Hegelian dialectic by Marx is also most comprehendable. Only by an interpretation of the first Hegelian writings and the *Phenomenology of Mind* can one prove that the full Being and occurrence of human life produces for Hegel the actual basis of the dialectic. Here are a few indications which must suffice for now.

It has already been indicated above how much the being-concept of life originally is at the bottom of the metaphysics of Hegel established through the *Phenomenology of Mind*. In an essential sense the truth of being is related to life and fulfilled in it. In the *Science of Logic* life is still the first "unmediated" form of the "idea," that is, of that "which is in and for itself true." The "idea" is to be accepted and recognized in this determination in which it is life, so that its observation may not be "something empty and undetermined."[5] Life in its "simple relation to itself" is true self, identification in otherness. It receives itself and behaves itself as Selfness and Oneness in the varied conditions of its vitality. And in this occurrence it creates itself as "omnipresent substance" and "universal medium" of being because it "mediates" (423) "the preconceived external world" with itself. It "takes control" of being opposite or opposed to it, "adapts" it to itself so that it makes this being "its means and gives it its subjectivity as substance" (425).

The concepts which elucidate this "life process" such as "taking," "adapt," "need," "production and reproduction," already reveal that this is not a matter of a cognitive process but of a really changing and realizing process of all life. This becomes fully clear in the presentation of this occurrence in the *Phenomenology*. The occurrence of life is here primarily the dialectic of knowing action, of changing "doing."

Although Hegel detemines the being of life from the beginning as "self-consciousness," thus as a type of "Mind" with reference to the "rationality" of life, nevertheless the full concretization of occurring life is contained in this concept of self-consciousness. Self-consciousness is at once *knowing* and *acting*, theoretical and practical reason—(just as in the *Science of Logic* the "idea of cognition" is at once theoretical and practical "idea")—indeed the theoretical idea is only completed in the practical life. The concepts with which the unfolding of life is described in the *Phenomenology*

5. Lasson edition, II, 414.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

give expression to the concrete unity of the full structure of life. "Greed and work," "observing, legislating, and law testing reason," "action of all and each one," "Creative labor", and the "thing itself," etc. The basis of the Hegelian dialectic is now to be explained with reference to one central category only—that of negation.

Marck distinguishes the critical dialectic from the Hegelian precisely through this concept of negation (6). The "negation of the negation" appears to him to be the most apparent expression for the metaphysics of absolute mind which transcends all boundaries of the finite Ego and identifies God and man. "Our thinking" can only preserve the contradiction: *it can not negate* (*aufheben*) it. "It cannot push aside that which is posited" (12).

This is undoubtedly correct as long as the Ego of knowing-cognition is meant. This Ego cannot, of course, negate. It remains tied to the given situation. Hegel himself emphasized this circumstance. He says of "cognition as such:" "this cognition is *finite*, because it has the preconditions of an already present or given world and with it its identity with that same world is not for it itself. The truth to which it can come is therefore also only finite."[6] It is exactly in this point that for Hegel the motive to go beyond simple "cognition as such" exists. Mere cognition is not yet the true form of the "idea" because of this circumstance of the object which can never be negated by it. It demands from out of itself the "practical idea" of action as its fulfillment and completion.

For the acting Ego (and, indeed, the knowing-acting Ego) really can negate, can push aside that which is postulated. The will of the acting Ego is a truly creating and changing one. It can push aside the present reality in order to put its own "creation" (*Werk*) in its place. The position of factual condition in the establishment of the dialectic becomes the actual basis of the argument between Marx and Hegel.

The concretized concept of negation is directed at the whole particular type of movement of human life in that world in which each one finds himself. This life can only occur by *going beyond* each respective "determination" of its existence, in which it finds itself, (and which is always necessarily negating and "accidental" as opposed to its further possibilities): by overcoming its own immediate present situation and driving itself forward out of its possibilities to a higher situation. It can only fulfill its essence if it mediates all its immediate existence (which, measured against its actual possibilities is essentially an "otherness," "loss of its self") with its self-being and changing this existence makes it its own, "adapts itself." Only in this change through the process of negation does the living Ego remain like itself in otherness.

This movement (based upon the treatise on the concept of life in the *Phenomenology* and the *Science of Logic*) of life does not only take place in the single individuals, but is at the same time and necessarily always an argument of the individuals among themselves and with the objective world.

6. *Heidelberg Encyclopedia*, Glockner edition, 135.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The neutralizing of otherness occurring in the life process always means a truly changing occurrence in the respective human and objective environment. The "dialectic" of the process of life has essentially such a "real" character. It is not a dialectic of pure cognition, but a dialectic of praxis. The concept of doing has in Hegel this decisive meaning of expressing precisely the essence of living self-consciousness and its reality. "Something is undertaken because the doing is in and for itself the essence of reality" (II 305), and the "absolute thing" is a reality, "whose existence is the reality and the doing of self-consciousness" (II, 314).

One example of this essential *action character* of the "negation" can be given here. In the *Phenomenology* the first (still incomplete) negation of objectivity, and hence the first union of consciousness and object, takes place through the "labor of the slave (LL, 148 ff). When the slave "works" on things, he negates the form of their objectivity (their pure negativity and otherness as opposed to the living consciousness). The thing already worked upon no longer relates to the living self-consciousness as mere otherness and negativeness, but relates as something belonging to it itself, available for "pleasure" and possession.

This remains true in the continuation of the thing in the form which the self-conscious labor the slave has given things (and only in this form). The laboring self-consciousness is its "substance," through which things first become concrete reality. Thus the "thingness which the form gets in labor, is no other substance but consciousness" (II, 151). The original "negative" of consciousness is now negated and absorbed into the unity of living self-consciousness.

At the same time as this "negation" takes place, there also occurs in the process of work yet another negation or neutralization, in the fact that the slave recognizes, that the things have permanence and reality only in the form which his labor has given them. He becomes conscious, who previously only stood in the "service of the master." He becomes conscious of his own independence. Through this "refinding of himself through himself" the slave's self-consciousness which has been serving only *another* becomes "his *own meaning*, precisely in the labor, in which it appeared to be only an alien meaning" (II, 149)."The laboring consciousness comes by this means to the perception of the independent being as its own self" (*ibid.*).

It is already evident from this example that Hegel here means the process of reification (*Verdinglichung*) and its transcendance (*Durchbrechung*) as a basic occurrence of human life, which Marx the represented as the basic law of historical development. This process is connected esssentially with the dialectical concept of "negation:" it is revealed in a different form in each stage of the *Phenomenology*. The contradiction of knowing consciousness and object of cognition is only one of the many forms of this process which lies in the very essence of human life.

From this point the theses about the connection between dialectic and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

historicity posited in the first essay also lose their apparent arbitrariness and violence. The being of the self-consciousness which Hegel developed in the *Phenomenology* is essentially *historical* being and was originally seen as such by Hegel. Just insofar as the dialectic "arises from the Ego" is it the dialectic of the self-consciousness, and it is also connected with historicity in the most intimate sense. For the full essence of self-consciousness is determined by historicity. This does not mean, as Marck thinks, that "the expansion of human existence is carried through to an absolute Logos" (170). Such an expansion is rather totally out of the question. For the establishing of the *totality* of being in the historical being of human life forbids precisely any statement about the "absolute being and any determination of being from the standpoint of the 'absolute Logos'." Hegel's dialectic, originally based on the concept of life, could only become an absolute dialectic by shutting down the originally maintained historicity of life within his system.

The problematic history of the working out of the connection between dialectic and historicity would above all have to present this strange doubling in the history of the Hegelian establishment of the dialectic, according to which originally life in its complete historicity produces the major concept of being. Then, however, this being goes beyond its own historicity and puts an end to it. It becomes "absolute Mind." This doubling appears already in the *Phenomenology* where the absolute mind has a *history*, and realizes and fulfills itself in the history of life at a particular stage. And then as this realized and fulfilled it proceeds in its part to preserve and fulfill all past and future history.

The first stage of this doubled basic foundation, the being of life in its historicity, is developed in the first sections of the *Phenomenology*. These sections present the being of life (for Hegel self-consciousness) in its position *vis-à-vis* the being of the "world" which has always been posited with this being, and they show how the totality of being is realized into that form in the history of life which as "Mind" makes up the truth of all being and completes its history. The history of life which realizes itself and the world as Mind ends with the existence of the "free people:" "in the life of a people the concept of realization of self-conscious reason has...its completed reality."[7]

The fact that the history of mind begins with the history of people, the "life of the free people" is already the first form of the realization of the mind points to the historical unfolding of life as the basis of the *Phenomenology of Mind*. Of course, "history" cannot be understood here as if Hegel were attaching his metaphysics to factual human history and then philosophizing about these (as in a certain sense he had in his later lectures on the philosophy of history). The *Phenomenology of Mind* is not a history of philosophy which always comes *post festum*. Hegel projected in this work the history of life in its basic structure which preceded all factual history—preceded in the sense that all factual history is a (respectively different) realization of such a basic

7. II, 265, also 267, and 332 ff.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

structure. In our example the process of reification and its "negation" is not a unique historical fact but an occurrence rooted in the essence of huma life, and which repeats itself at each stage of factual history in another form. The same is true of the relationship of "mastery and servitude," individual and general "creativity" (*Werk*), "state power and wealth" (II, 373 ff.), etc.

It is a serious mistake to interpret Hegel's attitude toward history primarily from the lectures on the philosophy of history or the philosophy of law—a mistake which even conceals still the intimate relationships between Hegel and Marx. Both works presuppose the *Phenomenology* on the one hand and the *Science of Logic* on the other hand in the sense that they already represent a reduction of their original discoveries. The historical concept which operates in them is a limitation and transformation of the original concept of history. In the philosophy of law and philosophy of history, history is still only a partial unfolding of the absolute mind, and indeed a partial unfolding only *of a particular part of this mind.*

A sufficiently in-depth interpretation of Marx would have to show that he began his critique of Hegel exactly at this point of Hegel's falling away from the original and full concept of history. Marx exposed again the original concept of history and the essential character of historical life, but not—and this *separates his work decisively not only from Hegel but from all philosophy*—for a philosophical determination of life within all being. Instead Marx attempts the analysis of the contemporary historical situation of this life with the purpose of a revolutionary upheaval. Thus does Marx describe the process of reification and its negation in the expressed limitation to its historical form decisive for this revolutionary situation, as the reification of life in capitalist commodity production.

The radical transformation of the Hegelian dialectic by Marx accordingly does not mean the distillation of philosophical method from a particular philophical system but rather the rediscovery of the dialectical movement of historical life discovered by Hegel and then covered up again. The dialectical connection of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis is only the general expression as a basic law of the historical movement of this life, for the necessary "negation" based in the being of life of the respective historical reality, in which life finds itself and which necessarily represents a collapse of its possibilities, the progress to a higher and truer reality which pushes aside the first (antithesis). And this negative unfolding of being is at the same time a "preserving" one. It also absorbs the realized positive possibilities at the given historical state. It is a critical sense directed to this unfolding of history, insofar as the preserving negation can only take place from the respectively present possibilities, from the knowledge about the realization of the past, its collapse, and its future.

Even the concept of "knowing" as it appears in Hegel's definition of life as "self-consciousness" has an originally *historical* content, which is expressly developed in the *Phenomenology of Mind.* The "mediating" movement of consciousness in which consciousness "merges" its respectively determined

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

existence with the "general mind" (the totality of being in its true form), takes place only on the way through the respective present "system of formations of consciousness," "which has its objective existence as world history" (II, 223). Life as self-consciousness is "a development which systematizes itself." Knowing life does not collapse or "decay" like organic nature "immediately into the details of existence" but gives itself from the knowledge of the present, already realized forms of the world, and in the confrontation with the "objective existence" of reality which is respectively present for it. And insofar as it does this, insofar as this preserving neutralization compromises its nature, it is history. And precisely on the basis of this its historicity it delimits itself from organic nature which has "no history" because precisely this movement directed by knowledge is lacking (*ibid.*).

From this point of view the criticism often directed against Hegel and Marx can be refuted, —namely, that they do not apply their dialectic to themselves, that their method "calls a halt" (Max Weber's phrase) right before their own camp. So little as the dialectic allows an arbitrary cessation, just as little does it permit an arbitrary continuation. The Hegelian dialectic is so rooted in Hegel's own system that this system itself cannot be turned over—there is no basis for such a theory external to the closed system. The Marxian dialectic cannot be applied to the situation in which Marx rooted it as long as this situation itself is not negated and a new dialectical movement founded with a new situation. Only from the basis of the realized proletarian revolution could the question about the possibility of a new dialectic of the unfolding of being and the development of history be postulated.

These suggestions are meant to show that Marck really does posit the genuine problems of the dialectic and uncovers the preconditions precisely for the questions of the Marxian dialectic.

PAUNCH

No. 44 May 1976

BILL J. HARRELL: MARX AND CRITICAL THOUGHT

An examination of the deepest problem in the Marxist tradition: the unresolved dual definition of freedom as the absence of necessity, and as the sensual interaction of subject and object. With discussion by Raya Dunayevskaya, Rollo Handy, Jeremy J. Shapiro, Carmen Sirianni, Bernard Murchland, and Kingsley Widmer. Reply by Harrell. $1.50 per copy.

Arthur Efron, Editor
123 Woodward Avenue, Buffalo, New York 14214

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Northrop Frye: Parameters of Mythological Structuralism

by John Fekete

A. *Introduction*

Northrop Frye's reputation and influence in the realm of bourgeois critical theory[1] are secure beyond challenge. Volumes could be written discussing his substantive system of literary theory, much of which in complexity, sophistication, erudition, and level of insight—hence in scope of ideological efficiency—far exceeds earlier formulations. The present analysis argues that Frye's theory embodies aesthetic capitulation to the commotive[2] forms of domination; it proposes a view of culture structurally articulated to preclude radical historical praxis.

Frye "has had an influence—indeed an absolute hold—on a generation of developing literary critics greater and more exclusive than that of any one theorist in recent critical history."[3] His speculative systematic construction, the representative form of bourgeois critical theory in the Anglo-American tradition in the late fifties and early sixties, is the appropriate moment of cultural ideology for a historical period of immobility. Frye is a Janus-faced interlude between John Crowe Ransom and Marshall McLuhan: on one hand, a consolidation and extension of the formalization of the literary realm, and, on the other, a preparation for a dynamic refocusing of critical theory aimed at the formalization of the totality of social communications. Frye's critical theory, to the extent that it is a scientistic criticism operating on a closed poetic universe, is arguably the last phase of the New Criticism; but in so far as it presents a structural linguistics and communications, in its analysis of the "verbal universe," it is arguably the first phase of that reorientation of the literary tradition that is associated with McLuhan. Frye's work represents a static moment of integrated capitulation between the two dynamic moments of, firstly, the New Critical disengagement of critical theory from social interest and, secondly, the reengagement of critical theory,

---

1. The term 'critical theory' is not meant to associated the modern theorists of literary culture with the Kantian philosophical tradition, nor with the 'critical theory' of the Frankfurt School. The aim of this usage is to avoid the narrow conceptual limitations of the alternative terms 'literary theory' or 'literary criticism' and to encompass the broader matrix of attention that became established through efforts from within the realm of literary studies to apprehend and assimilate categories of culture that have been emerging from the transformation of capitalism in this century and imposing their present. Frye uses the term 'critical theory.'

2. For a discussion of the category 'commotive,' as an alternative to 'conjunctural,' please see *Telos* 20 (Summer 1974), p. 3n, or *Telos* 15 (Spring 1973), p. 76n.

3. Murray Krieter, "Northrop Frye and Contemporary Criticism: Ariel and the Spirit of Gravity," in Murray Krieger, ed., *Northrop Frye in Modern Criticism: Selected Papers from the English Institute* (New York, 1966), p. 1.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

this time militantly on the side of the prevailing social motion, in the counter-revolutionary position of McLuhan. These two discontinuities, with respect to Ransom and to McLuhan, are situated within the continuity of a tradition of critical theory intelligible as the ideology of progressive cultural rationalization.[4]

Frye writes: "The critical path I wanted. . . was a theory of criticism which would first, account for the major phenomena of literary experience, and, second, would lead to some view of the place of literature in civilization as a whole."[5] Frye attempts to satisfy this double aim by formulating a critical theory that views literature as an order of words organized internally by recurring forms independent of history, that stresses the structural centrality of literature in civilization as a primary means (language) of mental production, and that regards the critical theory itself as synthetic and scientific. My argument is that Frye's theory represents in the modern tradition of critical theory that moment when the romantic 'cultural' sphere (which, for over a hundred years, had been located by theorists in opposition to, or in tension with utilitarian material developments, with what nineteenth-century diction called 'civilization') is reintegrated—*structurally*, but not (until McLuhan) with real *historical* reference—as a decisive *internal* principle at work in 'civilization.' This is an important move from the uneasy accommodation to the dominant social patterns that became embodied in New Critical aesthetics, and a prelude to the emergence, in McLuhan's writings, of the absolute dominance of cultural technology over the fate of civilization.

Frey's position implies two major arguments against the New Criticism, and expresses the development from empiricism to a unification of the cultural field by means of a single structural variable, the archetype. On one hand, it is said, empiricist close reading, although ingenious, is bound to be futile without a "sense of the archetypal shape of literature as a whole."[6] Frye aims "to give a rational account of some of the structural principles of Western literature in the context of its Classical and Christian heritage,"[7] structure being understood as the recurring principles of literature, such as convention and genre. On the other hand, empiricist close reading is said to neglect such moments of structure as genre because it is not concerned with the work of art in itself and "not as an artifact with a possible function;"[8] in consequence, it is insensitive to certain analogies of form. These analogies of form recover that most important thing which Frye claims the New Criticism lost: "the sense of

4. For further discussion of Ransom, McLuhan and the tradition as a whole, see my "McLuhanacy: Counterrevolution in Cultural Theory," *Telos* 15, *op.cit.*, pp. 75-123, and "The New Criticism: Ideological Evolution of the Right Opposition," *Telos* 20, *op.cit.*, pp. 2-51; as well as my "Reflections on Literary Theory and Culture," *Praxis* 1 (Spring 1975).

5. "The Critical Path: An Essay on the Social Context of Literary Criticism," *Daedalus, Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, XCIX (Spring 1970), p. 268. Hereafter cited as "Critical Path."

6. *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton, 1957), p. 342. Hereafter cited as *Anatomy*.

7. *Anatomy*, p. 133.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 95.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

context."[9] This context is "literature as an order of words"[10] whose structural principles recur in individual works. The analogical methodology, in general, becomes the basis in Frye for a much more extensive scientistic reationalization of the literary world than was possible for the New Criticism.

The second, and more far-reaching, development from New Criticism involves rejection of Ransom's ontological continuity between literature and the objective world. Frye argues for the complete autonomy of the poetic universe through a radical form-content distinction. He repudiates the "fallacy" of "existential projection," and insists that "the poet never imitates 'life' in the sense that life becomes anything more than the content of his work. In every mode he imposes the same kind of mythical form on his content, but makes different adaptations of it."[11] In consequence, Frye's critical theory takes up residence exclusively in the realm of the transhistorical, in the realm of permanent or recurring forms.

Frye embraces the romantic principle of the human origin of human civilization,[12] but this shift from a religious transcendence to immanence nonetheless preserves transcendence in secular form. The transhistorical becomes prehistorical; 'desire,' an idealist anthropological principle, is posited as the motor of the development, pre-existing its forms of manifestation. This is the category through which Frye links, on the formal level, culture and civilization. "Civilization is...the process of making a total human form out of nature, and it is impelled by the force that we have just called desire.... Desire is...not a simple response to need, for an animal may need food without planting a garden to get it, nor is it a simple response to want, or desire *for* something in particular. It is neither limited to nor satisfied by objects, but is the energy that leads human society to develop its own form.... The form of desire...is liberated and made apparent by civilization. The efficient cause of civilization is work, and poetry in its social aspect has the function of expression, as a verbal hypothesis, a vision of the goal of work and the forms of desire."[13] We should note that if "work is man's response to his own desire...to see the world in a human form,"[14] then work is simply the realization of a meaning that precedes it. In such a *one-sided* dialectic, a super-historical principle is set against historical activity. Desire becomes the subject of which the forms of historical praxis, and the objectifications of such praxis, are predicate determinations that can never fully express or realize it. It is not only that the categorical context is static and religious, in that "the major components" of this human form of nature are

9. "Critical Path," p. 272.
10. *Fables of Identity: Studies in Poetic Mythology* (New York, 1963), p. 127. Hereafter cited as *Fables*.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 63.
12. "The Road of Excess," *Myth and Symbol: Critical Approaches and Applications*, ed. Bernice Slote (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1963), p. 17.
13. *Anatomy*, pp. 105-106.
14. Northrop Frye, ed., *Selected Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, by William Blake (New York, 1953), p. xxv.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

identified as "the organizing metaphors of the Bible and of most Christian symbolism,"[15] but that, methodologically, a principle of eternity, pure and invariable, has priority over historical principles, which are considered only its partial predicates. "No matter how fully we may realize our own human natures by social discipline, there will always be a still higher order of nature which is not there, but which is desirable."[16] In Frye, a traditional Christian problematic blends with an idealized Freudian duality of reality principle and pleasure principle.

It is important to remember that "subjectivity,... by its very essence, can only affirm, maintain and conserve its own immediate content. It can never create *by itself* the internal contradictions producing change."[17] Frye's desire could not have become dissatisfied with its objects were it not for the production of new needs following satisfactions achieved in the labor process. Work is not simply the efficient agency of desire; desire itself is produced in the work process which is social man's metabolic interaction with nature, and produces both the human world of objects and the human nature of needs and desires (including their relative claims) in a dialectical spiral of reciprocity.[18] Ideologically, suppression of the emergence of qualitatively new aspects of human nature, or their subordination to a universal form of desire, precludes the supersession of alienation through the production of an anthropologically new future of genuinely new human forms, and capitulates to the prevailing material reality. Methodologically, this suppression locks art into the role of constructing the pure forms of desire "clear of the bondage of history."[19]

In fact, Frye shares the idealist orientation of symbolic form philosophy which sees man as an essentially symbolizing creature—an orientation built on a fetish of mental labor and particularly suitable to express the outlook of a new professional intelligentsia deeply involved in the system of neocapitalist production. In his view, desire is "an impulse toward expression,"[20] and the form of everything in human society and nature "expresses an aspect of the human mind."[21] As the outside world "yields importance and priority to the inner world," art, naturally, becomes the model of the creative power of man,[22] the "matrix" of the "totality of imaginative power" in the mind.

15. *Anatomy*, pp. 113, 141.

16. Northrop Frye, "Nature and Nothing," *Essays on Shakespeare*, ed. Gerald W. Chapman (Princeton, 1965), p. 48.

17. Tran Duc Thao, "The Rational Kernel in the Hegelian Dialectic," *Telos* 6 (Fall 1970), p. 124. Italics added.

18. For important and exhilarating explorations in the dialectic of need and desire, and for discussions of the contemporary shift in the center of gravity of this thoroughly *historical* dialectic from need to desire, from the claims of political economy to the claims of new human possibilities, pleasures and fulfillments, and for the implications of this commotive shift for *revolution*, see Murray Bookchin, *Post-Scarcity Anarchism* (Berkeley, 1971), especially "Desire and Need," pp. 271-286.

19. *Anatomy*, p. 347.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 106.

21. Northrop Frye, *Fearful Symmetry: A Study of William Blake* (Princeton, 1969), p. 123. Hereafter cited as *Fearful Symmetry*.

22. Northrop Frye, *The Stubborn Structure: Essays on Criticism and Society* (London, 1970), pp. 206-207. Hereafter cited as *Stubborn Structure*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Literature, specifically, "is the verbal part of the process of transforming the non-human world into something with a human shape and meaning, the process that we call culture or civilisation."[23]

The social significance of Frye's interpretation is a complete surrender to the established reality. Frye's position can be seen as an ideological product of a culture of magical idealism where imagined satisfactions associated with given objects take the place of the social reorganization necessary to effect the genuine satisfaction of real needs. There is, for Frye, the world we live in and the world we want to live in.[24] Art, he claims, always gives us the latter, a vision of its images "as permanent living forms outside time and space."[25] Science gives us the former, and, in studying literature as an autonomous part of reality, it is the task of scientific theory to establish the full context of the works of literature, relating an individual work to the whole of literature, culture, and civilization.

B. *The Critical Universe*

Frye's search for a "coherent and comprehensive theory of literature, logically and scientifically organized,"[26] develops the scientistic attitude of the New Criticism. Geoffrey Hartman's perspective on Frye suggests that "the most serious claim he makes is the possibility of system."[27] The attempt to treat literature as a structured language, with priority of the whole over its parts, grasped through several phases of displacement or transformation, on the foundations of a synchronic methodology—all these being the standard apparatus of modern structuralism—prepares for the stabilization and systematization of a formal discipline that is intended to be, in the prevailing positivist and scientistic conception, a workable schema to guide practical fieldwork, and "not a view of the universe, whether true or fictional."[28] Hartman correctly argues that a teachable system democratizes criticism, challenges the "English mystique of English Studies," and breaks the spell of the priest-interpreters.[29] However, the corollary is a rationalization of ideological heterogeneity and a more effective enforcement of the unifying scientistic ideology of domination. This specific feature of our period must be perceived: every *official* extension of democracy is at the same time an extension and deepening of the modes of oppression, in so far as it brings with

23. Northrop Frye, "The Rising of the Moon: A Study of *A Vision*," *An Honoured Guest: New Essays on W.B. Yeats*, ed. Denis Donoghue and J.R. Mulryne (London, 1965), p. 8.
24. *Stubborn Structure*, p. 17.
255. *Fearful Symmetry*, p. 85.
26. *Anatomy*, p. 11. 'Anatomy' is itself defined as "a vision of the world in terms of a single intellectual pattern" (p. 310) and Frye suggests that there is a finite number of valid critical methods which "can all be contained in a single theory" (p. 72). That, in the *Anatomy*, criticism is conceived as a science, systematic and progressive (pp. 7-8) while, in retrospect, the *Anatomy* is regarded as "schematic" rather than primarily systematic (Frye, "Reflections in a Mirror," p. 136), makes no essential difference to the ideological drive towards rationalized integrity that characterizes this tradition.
27. "Ghostlier Demarcations," p. 110.
28. Frye, "Reflections in a Mirror," p. 137.
29. *Op.cit.*, pp. 110-11, 114, 115.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it a broader participation in, and adherence to, the administration of a tendentially total domination, under an increasingly systematic and stabilized rationality.

This last point, of emancipation from mystique, holds further ambivalences whose wource within the theory is in the intimate coexistence of scientific and non-scientific elements, or put more broadly, in that contradictory unity of rational and irrational elements that is repeatedly formed through the process of rationalization in each phase of the tradition. Poet-critics have noted that Frye's work in essential respects is mythic and poetic,[30] that is, that it is a mixed discourse; and that his diction propagates a religious mystique of literature,[31] and carries "constant implication or intimation of the primordial, the more mysterious the better."[32] Frye talks of "the fertilizing of life by learning,"[33] but he revives archaic doctrines, such as Ptolemaic cosmology, four levels of existence, or the four elements and humors, and insists that these are eternal and ineluctable structures of symbolism, belonging, of necessity and forever, to both the poetic and the critical universes.[34]

It has been said of Frye's system that "its prominent quality is its incorporation of idealistic, irrationalist, and obscurantist tendencies from the whole of Western tradition."[35] While a stress on the adjectives makes for a useful descriptive statement, we can gain significant analytic insight only by placing the emphasis on the word "incorporation." For the specificity of the position is precisely that moments that express an alienation from the present in space and time and ideology are drawn into and contained within a scientistic system-building schematism.

Some parallels with French structuralism can be noted in this complex. On one hand, there is the question of isomorphism between object discourse and critical discourse; this structural discourse on myths would be, for Lévi-Strauss, as it tends to be in Frye, mythomorphic. On the other, as Jacques Derrida demonstrates, there is the separation of *method* from *truth* in the exploitation of old concepts as analytical tools in handling the

30. Robin Skelton, "The House that Frye Built," *Canadian Literature* 24 (Spring 1965), p. 63; A.J.M. Smith, "The Critic's Task: Frye's Latest Work," *Canadian Literature* 20 (Spring 1964), p. 6; John Holloway, "The Critical Zodiac of Northrop Frye," *The Colours of Clarity: Essays on Contemporary Literature and Education* (London, 1964), p. 153.

31. Walter Sutton, *Modern American Criticism* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1963), p. 183.

32. W.K. Wimsatt, "Northrop Frye: Criticism as Myth," *Northrop Frye in Modern Criticism*, p. 98.

33. *Anatomy*, p. 25.

34. Thus earth, air, water, and fire are "not the elements of nature," and useless to chemistry, but they "are still the four elements of imaginative experience, and always will be." Likewise, the four humours are "not the constituents of human temperament" and useless to medicine, yet remain "the elements of imaginative perception." Cf. Northrop Frye, "Preface," *The Psychoanalysis of Fire*, by Gaston Bachelard, trans. Alan C.M. Ross (London, 1964), p. vii. Indeed, he makes this claim for the "whole pseudo-scientific world of three spirits, four humours, five elements, seven planets, nine spheres, twelve zodiacal signs, and so on," and, in general, for symmetrical cosmologies and systems of correspondences. *Anatomy*, p. 161.

35. Pauline Kogan, *Northrop Frye: The High Priest of Clerical Obscurantism*, Literature and Ideology Monographs 1 (Montreal, 1969), p. 56.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

machinery to which they belong. That is, Lévi-Strauss, like Frye, seeks "to preserve as an instrument that whose truth-value he criticizes."[36] But this radical distinction between methodological value and onto-epistemological non-value is a positivism in the face of its object and, ultimately, an abdication of the historical centerdness of the critic and hence a vitiation of criticism.

The same abdication is involved in Frye's insistence on a 'categorical,' value-free criticism. Frye recognizes that value judgments are class-determined, and argues that criticism "obviously has to look at art from the standpoint of an ideally classless society."[37] But, since Frye does not situate the theory from the point of view of *struggle* for a classless society, this standard does not have a base in the future as the goal of a process of human activity. Here, as in the case of his 'hypothetical' art, future-oriented imperatives are precluded as standards for criticism of the present. The position simply elevates science above the levels of historical interests, and hence means total capitulation to the established class relations.

If value judgments are not cognitively demonstrable but rather "a Narcissus mirror of our own experience and social and moral prejudice,"[38] then academic criticism is systematic, "categorical and descriptive: it tries to *identify* a writer's work," that is, to see it "as an individual of a class," to place it "into its proper literary context."[39] This criticism requires of the critic that he have experience of literature, not experience of life, and aims at structure not content.[40] Accordingly, criticism proper is archetypal criticism, which begins beyond New Critical commentary with the study of conventional recurrences, archetypes and genres. The methodological principle involved is the discovery of analogies of structure. This analogical formalization permits the freezing, under the fixed categories of scientistic criticism, of diverse phenomena of broad cultural fields, for example, literature and television, whose differences Frye excludes as being mainly in value.[41]

Two main points must be indicated here. First we cannot escape valuation; the fact-value separation is untenable for a human life conceived as becoming. Facts are moments of a subject-object totality in motion and they are known only within this historical context; the ontological life processes are the source of value and these figure, ultimately, in the constitution of fact.[42] In this respect, the critic always faces the object in the light of his own

36. "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," *The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man: The Structuralist Controversy,* ed. Richard Macksey and Eugenio Donato (Baltimore, 1970), pp. 255, 257.

37. *Anatomy,* p. 22.

38. *Stubborn Structure,* p. 68.

39. Northrop Frye, "Literary Criticism," *The Aims and Methods of Scholarship in Modern Languages and Literatures,* ed. James Thorpe (New York, 1963), pp. 61, 66.

40. *Ibid.,* pp. 63, 68.

41. *Stubborn Structure,* p. 101.

42. But this point is perhaps by now becoming more or less accepted; many philosophers of science recognize that there is no neutral observation langauge and that scientific paradigms are normative as well as cognitive when they give form to scientific life in determining theory, methods, and standards together, as well as the criteria of legitimacy of both problems and solutions. Cf. Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago, 1962), p. 108.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

history, and structures the object—never exhaustively—through the choice of what is essential in relation to his location in that history. Lucien Goldmann warns that any pretension to non-ideological value-free social science is one of the gravest forms of dogmatism.[43] In the case of archetypal criticism, this means projection of a specific rationality into works of art as their inherent structure, followed by postulation of this as the basis of formalization.

The second point concerns the desirability of critical statement beyond description. If art has subversive, defetishizing capabilities, then it is the task of criticism to make this available on the conscious level. Criticism must confront and choose what is essential about art for our epoch in this sense, and translate into discursive language the generic hierarchy of values that can serve as a standard of critique against the fetishism of everyday life. It must find vital ways to speak for and to speak about the work of art; by contrast, the critical theories of neocapitalism are oriented only to consumption.

One last aspect of scientistic criticism needs to be examined here: the search for internal coherence that intervenes in the definition of the object of the science. Frye argues that literature cannot be taught, only criticism can; the former is the object, the latter the subject of study. He defends criticism against charges of parasitism, and seeks to establish criticism as an independent "structure of thought and knowledge."[44] As the first postulate of the coordinating principle of critical science, Frye posits "the assumption of total coherence." He finds that "criticism cannot be systematic unless there is a quality in literature which enables it to be so, an order of words corresponding to the order of nature in the natural sciences."[45] But human literary verbalizations are not uniform: "literature does not have a unifying and immutable structure because human beings produce it as an ideological form of their social experience which is constantly changing with history."[46] Scientism eliminates from attention the real ontology of its object; in Frye it makes impossible the real historical task of criticism. The reduction by analogy to the condition of natural phenomena locks art into permanence and blocks the critical translation of art from a form of aesthetic self-consciousness into a form of discursive consciousness that is relevant to and essential for the historical reality of the epoch. In this way, a trans-historical fetish again triumphs over the concrete historical problematic. Complete surrender to the positivity of identifying fixed structures in a synchronic field means that critical theory, and, in its characterization, art, are not to be available as moments of human liberation.

C. *The Poetic Universe*

Frye rejects 'chronology' as the organizing principle of literature and transforms T.S. Eliot's problematic of an ideal order of works into the

43. "Structuralisme, marxisme, existentialisme," *L'Homme et la société* 2 (October-December, 1966), p. 110.
44. *Anatomy*, pp. 11, 3, 5.
45. *Fables*, pp. 9-12.
46. Kogan, *op.cit.*, p. 13.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

assertion that "literature is not a piled aggregate of 'works,' but an order of words,"[47] organized by recurring forms, that is, conventions. The study of conventionality is to solve the problems of relating individual works to the intermediate groupings of genre, or to the whole of literature. Frye is interested in a poem "as a unit of poetry," concentrates on the connections of literary works through what they have in common on the level of form, and focuses on the 'archetypal' and 'analogic' aspects of literature which reveal the relation between "the order of nature as a whole" and "a corresponding order of words."[48]

Raymond Williams has argued that criticism needs the concept of 'structure of feeling,' that is, a sense of concrete, historical-cultural density, to explore the relations between what is specific to the individual work and what is specific to higher level groupings such as genre.[49] Frye eliminates this entire dimension; the methodological choice of formal simultaneity, of trans-historical synchronic structure, lifts literature out of history, cuts the lifeline from experience to expression, and, as has been noted,[50] fosters critical systematizing by abolishing the problem of valuation in considering a unity of the whole of literature as a given of our literary experience.

Moreover, dissolution of the individual work in the perspective of universality impedes conceptualizing artistic catharsis, and eliminates the concrete social effect of art. It is the incomparable formal perfection and self-enclosedness of each work, its self-reliance in relation to other works, that permits the reality of the world created in each work to have experiential cogency, to enforce intensive participation by the recipients, and to effect the cathartic confrontation with the world of everyday experience.[51]

In its archetypal aspect, literature is a "mode of communication" structured by the units of communication, the "typical or recurring" symbols, that is, the conventions that connect individual works and "unify and integrate our literary experience."[52] But literary experience as part of the continuum of life, of civilization, "is still useful and functional." Frye postulates an "anagogic" aspect to literature, "where it is disinterested and liberal," a completely "self-contained literary universe." In this aspect, "Nature is now inside the mind of an infinite man who builds his cities out of the Milky Way. This is not reality, but it is the conceivable or imaginative limit of desire, which is infinite, eternal, and hence apocalyptic." We now have to deal with "a universal man who is also a divine being, or a divine being conceived in anthropomorphic terms."[53] Thus the image of divinity is

47. *Anatomy*, pp. 16-18.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
49. *Drama from Ibsen to Brecht* (London, 1968), pp. 17-18.
50. Alvin C. Kibel, "Academic Circles," *The Kenyon Review* XXVI (Spring 1964), p. 422.
51. In this general area is the real basis for the widespread criticism of Frye by defenders of 'minute particularity' who sense that the autonomy of each work is being violated, although, it must be stressed, the issue ought to be one of intensive totality, not of the extensive totality sought by empiricist critical apprehension.
52. *Anatomy*, p. 99.
53. *Ibid.*, pp. 115-120.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

preserved in the deification of man. This hazard of transcendentalism haunts a humanism that has no perspective on the future for judging human activity.[54] Literature in this view exists "in its own universe," "containing life and reality in a system of verbal relationships." In the anagogic aspect, its organizing principle is not analogy but its ideological complement, identity, the unity of variety: "everything is potentially identical with everything else."[55]

The position has at its center a significant ideological determination. "The study of literature takes us toward seeing poetry as the imitation of infinite social action and infinite human thought, the mind of a man who is all men, the universal creative word which is all words. About this man and word we can, speaking as critics, say only one thing ontologically: we have no reason to suppose either that they exist or that they do not exist."[56] Art and critical theory are divorced not only from historical determinations in their origins and formation, but even from the realm of real historical existence altogether. An ontological agnosticism reduces both art and critical theory to purely epistemological status, without a real basis in the real life process of real human beings. Literature no longer has the ontological reference it had in Ransom and it no longer embodies a significance. Frye's very influential position holds that literary symbolism is not actual knowledge of some substance, but a mode of apprehension, a language; not truth, but "a means of expression,"[57] that is, a system of signifiers.[58]

The symbolist aspects of this position are contained by the stress on conventionality. Archetypal criticism resolves the militant Romantic opposition between desire and convention by casting the former irrevocably in

54. In general, Frye explicitly acknowledges the connections between anagogy and religion (e.g., *Anatomy*, pp. 120-122). But his general attitude had already been proclaimed a decade before, in the affirmation of a "structure which will make room for humane values and established religion and not scare the pants off the middle-class reader" ("Toynbee and Spengler," *The Canadian Forum* [August, 1947], p. 111).

55. *Anatomy*, pp. 122-125.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 125.

57. *Fables*, pp. 218, 236.

58. Henri Lefebvre has repeatedly argued that since the early part of this century—roughly, since the early preparatory stages of neocapitalism—there has taken place, under the pressure of science, technology, and social changes, a decline of referentials, a destruction of systems of reference to perceptible reality (involving the disappearance of perspectival space from painting and the tonal system from music), and with this, an uncoupling of signifier and signified within the sign. Cf. *Everyday Life in the Modern World*, trans. Sacha Rabinovitch (London, 1971), pp. 112-120; *Au-delà du structuralisme* (Paris, 1971), pp. 247-248. We should understand this rupture of denotation and connotation as a necessary mechanism of manipulative capitalism in its drive for the complete rationalization of a one-dimensional totality. Earlier, Mallarmé and the Symbolists had tried to divorce signifiers from signifieds, meaning from what was meant, in a desperate and abstract protest against the social dehumanization of language and in the search for innocence. When neocapitalism makes the process systematic, the innocence of signifiers is only a transitional step to their greater corruption. In princple, signifiers are freed for a rich expanded field of significances; in practice the associations are provided, sanctioned, and institutionally enforced on the grounds of the existing reality. In principle, signifiers and signifieds can be recoupled *ad libitum*; in practice, all recoupling is formed and controlled by the rule of the commotive categories, and all signifiers articulate the system itself. Frye's view of literature represents the abject surrender of critical theory to this process of rationalization.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the forms of the latter. If literature expresses the forms of desire, the principle of form is recurrent conventionality. According to this argument, just as science takes mathematical symbols for the only objectivity in the material world, so literary science takes archetypal symbols for the only objectivity in the literary world. The forms of literature are said to emerge from the structures of literature itself; the poet does not imitate 'life' but other poems; he always "imposes the same kind of mythical form on his content, but makes different adaptations of it."[59] "Literature may have life, reality, experience, nature, imaginative truth, social conditions, or what you will for its *content*; but literature itself is not made out of these things.... Literature shapes itself, and is not shaped externally." Form "is a manifestation of the universal spirit of poetry."[60]

The point here is not only the suppression of content as a determination of literature, nor only the vacuousness of a conception of form as something that is desocialized and no longer regarded as the objectification of social experience and informing *telos*. Nor is it only that Frye, like structuralists in general, cannot explain formal development and transition, and, in fact, does not even try, his literary history being simply a cyclical image of transformations in the idea of the hero. What is most important is the technological picture of a form that is independent of all content, *but able to absorb all content*. This ideology of the recurrence and essential immutability of a universal rationality excludes all conflict, and precludes all qualitative change that depends on a gap between form and content; the theory provides no access to such conflict and change.

We meet the same ideological construction in the analysis of the function of art. For Frye, art is a secondary imitation of thought and action, an imitation of universality without external model,[61] which may or may not have any kind of relation with the "worlds of truth and fact."[62] Frye makes two seemingly contradictory statements about the relation of this art to our everyday experience. First, he denies the view that literature as a whole serves "to illuminate something about life, or reality, or experience, or whatever we call the immediate world outside literature."[63] Second, he argues that literature "creates an autonomous world that gives us an imaginative perspective on the actual one."[64]

The inconsistency—that literature both does and does not cast light on actual life—is only apparent, and a third statement of Frye's presents a resolution in terms that suggest that, although the imaginative construct throws no light on the actual workings of non-literary life, yet, in the light of the imaginative construct, we can recognize the inferior or illusory reality of

59. *Anatomy*, p. 63.
60. *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.
61. *Fables*, p. 53.
62. *Anatomy*, pp. 92-93.
63. *A Natural Perspective: The Development of Shakespearean Comedy and Romance* (New York, 1965), p. 2.
64. *Stubborn Structure*, p. 298.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

non-literary experience. Art guarantees "a reality in our lives that is clear of the dissolving chaos of experience. We go out of the theatre into 'real life' again, which we know now to be also an illusion because of a reality that we have glimpsed for an instant in the illusion of the play."[65] Critical theory capitulates totally to the prevailing material reality by abandoning it. Art becomes not an imaginative symbolic world that makes available a defetishized experience of our real world with the imperative to change our actual lives, but, instead, an alternative and superior reality that competes with and exposes (to no practical purpose) the inadequacy of actuality. Instead of the mimetic evocation of the essentials and potentials of our reality, art is said to offer a "spectacular mimesis" that can look down on experience because of the presence of an ecstatic vision of innocence.[66]

For Frye, the key to this problem is in a conception of the archetypal function of literature as the visualization of the world of desire: "not as an escape from 'reality,' but as the genuine form of the world that human life tries to imitate."[67] Art and material life are both forms of expression of the transhistorical principle, 'desire;' but art, in its innocence of history, gives us the genuine form of desire, experience, its always inadequate corruptions. This is why the arts, in Frye's view, do not evolve or improve: "vision, being pure wish, can reach its conceivable limits at once."[68]

Frye is conducting a Freudian transformation of what was the Platonizing Renaissance version of the Christian duality consisting in two levels of nature, unfallen and fallen, with "art being identical with nature at its higher level."[69] But where the Renaissance subordination of nature to human creativity was progressive, as the metabolism characterizing the always ineluctable relationship of mankind with nature was shifting towards social domination of the relationship on the basis of an expansion of human productive power, Frye's superordination of imaginative power over the material world leaves the latter unchanged. It is another form of the fact-value or is-ought separation. Abdicating from the actualization of value, it blocks the dialectics of qualitative change. And if the Renaissance did not yet have a future orientation, only an ideal 'ought' referring to its present,[70] the 'ought' in Frye's critical theory is an escape from and denial of the future, and a surrender to the present.

The stress on desire and wish suggest a Freudian problematic. Indeed, Freud exempts fantasy from control by the reality principle. Frye's 'desire' is the eternal and transhistorical id idealized and satisfied in the imaginative realm free from the historical ego. In the modern period, Freud's structure of the psyche has been repeatedly adopted, adapted, and used by anti-historical ideologies of permanence. The imagination, however, as Marcuse argues, is

65. "Nature and Nothing," p. 58. All three statements date from 1965.
66. *Anatomy*, p. 301.
67. *Ibid.*, p. 184.
68. *Fables*, p. 153.
69. "Nature and Nothing," p. 58.
70. Cf. Agnes Heller, *A reneszansz ember* [*Renaissance Man*] (Budapest, 1967), p. 151.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

restrained by sense experience and reason, both products of class history, so that "history enters into the projects of the imagination."[71] But most important are the two key effects of Frye's contraposition of a pure, superior imaginative dream to an impure reality. On one hand, the abolition of *catharsis*, the shock to subjectivity, in the confrontation of aesthetic immediacy with everyday immediacy, in favor of *ecstasis*, the vision of innocence accessible only symbolically. On the other hand, by corollary, this symbolic ecstasy is substituted for the transformation of material reality, in such a way as to obscure the real historical possibility of realizing this ecstasy in the actual everyday life of real human beings. As it stands, literature remains a dream, indeed, "two dreams, a wish-fulfillment dream and anxiety dream,...focused together, like a pair of glasses."[72] Alvin C. Kibel has noticed that this makes an unattractive program for culture if it has "social issue by rigorously manipulating all expressions of desire and anxiety into a coordinated whole."[73] In this respect, Frye's critical theory is precisely an ideological articulation of the manipulative culture of neocapitalism.

The Freudian view of literary functionality is paralleled here by a Freudian conception of literary structure. Myths or archetypes are structural elements in literature "because literature as a whole is a 'displaced' mythology,"[74] myth itself being the "union of ritual and dream in a form of verbal communication," operating "near or at the conceivable limits of desire."[75] In Frye's view, the structural principles of literature can be found in undisplaced form in the Greek and Biblical mythologies, which is why, he says, literature revolves around certain classics.[76] Later, myth is displaced towards verisimilitude, that is, made plausible in several transformations that retain the basic structure.[77] The archetype "changes its context but not its essence."[78]

There have been three main criticisms of this position, and I will add some of my own. First, with reference to the explicit matrix of time, Frank Kermode has noted that literature today has a different reality principle from myth, appropriate to *this* time, as myth was to another.[79] Others, including W.K. Wimsatt, have attributed the appeal of the position to its "primitivist aura,"[80] something that one meets again in McLuhan. 'Primitive' remains an

71. Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation* (London, 1969), p. 29.
72. Northrop Frye, *The Educated Imagination* (Toronto, 1963), p. 43.
73. "The Imagination Goes to College," *Partisan Review* XXXII (Summer 1965), p. 466.
74. *Fables,* pp. 1, 14-15.
75. *Anatomy*, pp. 106-136.
76. Northrop Frye, "The Developing Imagination," *Learning in Language and Literature* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), pp. 44-45, 41.
77. *Anatomy*, pp. 136-137.
78. *Stubborn Structure*, p. 82.
79. *Continuities* (London, 1968), p. 120.
80. "Northrop Frye: Criticism as Myth," p. 97.
81. See "Preface to an Uncollected Anthology," *Studia Varia...*, ed. E.G.D. Murray (Toronto, 1957), p. 33; "Poetry," *University of Toronto Quarterly* XXV (April, 1956), p. 291. In a decade of doing the annual review of poetry for the "Letters in Canada" section of the *University of Toronto Quarterly*, Frye reported and-or shaped and influenced a growing tendency among Canadian poets towards a "steadily more professional...emphasis on the formal elements of poetry, on myth, metaphor, symbol, image, even metrics." Cf. "Poetry," *University of Toronto Quarterly*, XXVII (July, 1958), p. 438.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

important category in Frye's poetics as a synonym for formal, stylized, allusive, mythic poetry.[81] On the whole, the return to the mythical represents a nostalgic search for unity, a desire for essence, a striving for permanence[82]—all typical components of the modern tradition of critical theory.

Second, M.H. Abrams has argued that the analogical canon of Freudian displacement theory, that "analogy justifies identification," is the formula of archetypal reasoning, such that any complex work can be "made to resemble almost any archetypal shape." He has noted as well that the methodology involves "a study regress to unity," "to one hypothetical *Urmythos*."[83] I have suggested earlier the ideological function of analogy as the means to unity in the process of rationalization; it now seems worth adding two further features of Frye's system. On one hand, he contends, the basic principles for assimilating nature to human form in myth or poetry are "the most primitive categories, the categories of analogy and identity, simile and metaphor,... essentially the categories of magic."[84] On the other, he claims, all stories in literature are episodes of a central story, the Fall: "this story of the loss and regaining of identity is...the framework of all literature."[85] Identity is the goal of rationalization; it is supported and reinforced in Frye's work by three converging obsessions: the idealist-mythical obsession with subject-object identity, the Freudian obsession in the fifties with ego problems, and the Canadian obsession with national identity, often as a cover for class and colonial oppression. (All these, naturally, have a certain social mandate.)

Third, there has been widespread New Critical assertion that the use of typological materials has to be earned and comprehended through minute particularity.[86] As a set of empiricist arguments against structure, this New Critical campaign fails; Frye could always reply that he too wants his structures embedded, and that structure, in fact, means greater concreteness. Nonetheless, we can join the critique of Frye on this point, but from a different angle. For Frye's structural readings present only changing immobilities, not history; limited to a cross section, they can give only a system of abstract possibility from which no concreteness can be disengaged. We need to redirect attention, however, not merely to extensive particular detail, but to the immanent intentionality within art of a class-related and species-related *telos* that articulates the minute particulars into the specific typologies of the literary form.

Ideologically, Frye's theory is an expression of, and surrender to, immobility. Methodologically, displaced myth is a fixed principle that varies quantitatively; in other words, it admits change but not qualitative history.

82. Cf. Ernst Fischer, *The Necessity of Art: A Marxist Approach*, trans. Anna Bostock (Harmondsworth, 1963), p. 166.

83. Review of *The Anatomy of Criticism*, in *University of Toronto Quarterly* XXVIII (January, 1959), pp. 194-196.

84. "Critical Path," pp. 289-290.

85. *The Educated Imagination*, pp. 20-21.

86. See, for example, John Casey, *The Language of Criticism* (London, 1966), pp. 145-146, 150.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Conventions are naturally crucial in human life, but the real essence of humanity is expressed in the new. Today, especially, the struggle between old and new is decisive for our future, and Frye's theory has no place for the genuinely new—its center of gravity is deeply entrenched in recurrence. There is, of course, recurrence in real life, because mankind is transhistorical and labor is characteristic of all our specific and transient social systems in space and time. More particularly, for the individual, everyday life is composed of a pattern of recurrence. But a point of view that makes a fetish of form also makes a *fetish* of the transhistorical recurrence, in abstraction from its socio-historical place. In this respect, critical theory fails to supersede the point of view of everyday life. History, which for us now must mean future, not only past, is precluded. Cycle takes its place, the temporal equivalent of Frye's spatial systematization; and the five modes of his literary history "evidently go around in a circle."[87] On the whole, the controlling ideas of the theory make supersession of the given actuality inaccessible. Archetypal criticism deforms the real human subject even within the poetic universe by denial of historical concreteness. In a static recurrence, "men no longer have faces, only functions. History is senseless."[88]

D. *The Verbal Universe*

If the poetic universe is freed of all historical determinations with respect to origin and formation, this is Frye's means to a structural reintegration of the poetic universe within the web of social life, in a constitutive role as a primary instrument of "mental production."[89] On one hand, there is the poetic universe proper, the upper verbal world of imagination, the "holiday or Sabbath world where we rest from belief;" on the other, there is the lower verbal world of "belief, concern, argument, and every form of verbal defence or aggression."[90] Together they make up the verbal universe which has a continuous structure in poetic myth. Before we can investigate this integration and arrive at Frye's notion of cultural revolution, we need to examine this second (lower) verbal world, and to trace a sequence of thought from it to notions of education, leisure, and the epistemological dialectic of appearance and reality. Frye's argumentation is laced with the Cold War polarities of open and closed societies, open and closed mythologies, and their correlations, as well as with analyses of the present epoch. These serve primarily to disguise the absence of really open relations, genuine community, authentic individual autonomy, and equality of essential conditions and resources in the given society.[91]

87. *Anatomy*, p. 42.

88. Agnes Heller, "Shakespeare and History," *New Left Review* 32 (July-August, 1965), p. 19.

89. *Stubborn Structure*, p. 16.

90. "Critical Path," pp. 340, 341.

91. For a discussion of open and closed society, see, *inter alia*, Stanley Ryerson, *The Open Society: Paradox and Challenge* (New York, 1965). Frye's discussions of the present are almost unrelieved apologetics. In *The Modern Century* (Toronto, 1967), p. 65, he argues "the decline of confidence in progress" as part of his systematized bulwark against the qualitatively new; "the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Unlike disinterested literary mythology, says Frye, the social mythology of concern is an eycyclopedic compendium of what most concerns a society to know in relation to the central question, "what must we do to be saved?"[92] Its function is to cement social cohesion and Frye permits the synonym of "ideology" in "most contexts." He considers the ideological impulse "a central part of the religious impulse," at least in the sense of "*religio*, of binding together a society with the acts and beliefs of a common concern."[93] The whole tradition of modern critical theory assimilates culture to religion, and problems of social cohesion are central to it. The Agrarian critique, Frye's concern mythology, and McLuhan's vision of a universal communion manifest in the global village are all uncritical explorations of aspects of this problematic. The historical difference is that, for the Agrarians, these cultural moments contradict the structural social development; for Frye, they are integrated as conditions and expressions of it, while for McLuhan, they are fully constitutive and determinant. In the immediate, Frye's concern myth leads to the depreciation of class and national boundaries as he affirms without historical mediation, that "the only abiding loyalty is one to mankind as a whole."[94]

Frye combines the moment of cohesion with an internal elite tendency, "the

---

only conceivable goal is greater stability" (*Modern Century*, p. 33). Democracy, in fact, is a "genuinely revolutionary society, neither about to be revolutionized nor trying to retain its present structure, but mature enough to provide for both change and stability" (*Stubborn Structure*, p. 60). Indeed, revolution "can now, in our society, only be associated with some kind of centralized action, usually by the government" (*Modern Century*, p. 91). He explicitly rejects social revolution as producing a worse situation than the present class inequality ("The Knowledge of Good and Evil," *The Morality of Scholarship*, ed. Max Black [Ithaca, 1967], p. 12; hereafter cited as *Morality*); as it happens, contemporary American social mythology, he claims, is "an unusually benevolent and well-intentioned one" (*Morality*, p. 17). The test is its realization in practice, and the practice for which Frye and the social mythology provide justification is perhaps the most appalling in human history. He recognizes the alienation of youth, but explicitly rejects imperialist war, exploitation, competition, and racism as possible causes, in favor of "such factors as noise, pollution and overcrowding" ("Critical Path," pp. 311-312). Moreover, he says, "a great deal of youthful spontaneous idealism is obviously being exploited by leaders who do not share it" ("Critical Path," p. 318). On the whole, Frye's social analysis is a reductive psychologism that operates in a domesticated Fruedian frame. Today there are no tyrants to hate, "no one essentially different from ourselves" (*Stubborn Structure*, p. 6); parasite and host are both passive, tyranny "a projection of. . . pusillanimity" (*Fearful Symmetry*, p. 57). No social action "such as expropriating a propertied class, would end alienation in the modern world;" "alienation becomes psychological" (*Modern Century*, p. 24); the tyrant is part of "our own death-wish" (*ibid.*, p. 25). Frye specifies social Freudianism as the "democratic counterpart of Marxism" (*Stubborn Structure*, p. 293); for him, the twentieth century proletariat is Freudian, not Marxist, and the issue is the liberation of sexual instinct, associated with the creative process, from the repressive anxiety structure of society ("Critical Path," p. 304; *Modern Century*, p. 79; *Morality*, p. 15). Frye simply raises the bankrupt slogan, borrowed from the U.S. Declaration of Independence, of "life, freedom, and happiness" (*Morality*, p. 15), while his psychologism dismisses, *ex cathedra*, every real social demand. Finally, in establishing the ironic vision (taken over from the New Criticism), with "its features of anguish, nausea, and absurdity" (*Morality*, p. 23) as the predominant poetic and social mythology of our day, marking "the ascendence of a technological society" (*Stubborn Structure*, p. 53), Frye legitimates the sense of powerlessness in the face of these categories.

92. "Critical Path," pp. 277, 283.
93. *Morality*, p. 25; "Critical Path," p. 308.
94. *Morality*, p. 26.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

myth of freedom," which is the sole preserve of an educated minority and defends objectivity and tolerance.[95] In this argument, open societies like the North American require open mythologies; these are founded on a myth of freedom that embodies a spiritiual authority of loyalty to scientific rationality. This is "the permanent center of real authority in a civilized community."[96] In no respect does this 'myth of freedom,' which here unites the scientistic with the religious, pose the real problematic of liberation.

All concern myths, says Frye, involve a notion of social contract and a utopian notion of future ideal. Both are projections from the present—into the past and future, respectively, "of a source of social authority that sits in the middle of our society, and which I shall call the educational contract."[97] The massive neocapitalist expansion and idolatry of education, the transformation of knowledge production into a key industry, have established the institution of education as an important ideological apparatus of the state. If Frye's philosophy of science takes criticism out of the hands of 'priest-interpreters,' as Geoffrey Hartman claimed, Frye's philosophy of education locates the critics as new high priests, in the sense of guardians of the given order. It is the university which, for Frye, defines the community of spiritual authority. Ordinary society is mere appearance, too transient to be real. "Real society itself can only be the world revealed to us through the study of the arts and sciences, the total body of human achievement out of which the forces come that change ordinary society so rapidly. Of this world the universities are the social embodiment, and they represent. . .the only visible direction in which our higher loyalties and obligations can go."[98]

This conception should be understood as deeply reified ideology cast in idealist form. Much of our humanity, developed over the course of history, exists today only outside individuals, in objectifications whose appropriation is blocked by the given mode of our social reality. The arts and sciences are among these objectifications. Moreover, the power of these objectifications is at present set against the human subjects, and determines the activities of ordinary life. But this reification must be abolished, not entrenched. Frye's position involves a double fetish. The emphasis on the "achievement," on the tradition that has been already accomplished, against the need, the desire, and the power to transform the old, to create the new, is a fetish of trans-historicality that preserves the reification of the *constituted* culture against any creative historical activity that might defetishize the achievement in the rhythm of revolutionary praxis. And the fetish of *spiritual* objectifications, as if they composed the whole body of humanity, obscures the reification of other systems of objectifications, of the relations and institutions of material culture, all of which must be not only studied but defetishized in the struggle to end reification. We will gain contact with our real humanity, not through positive scholarship by itself, but through actively changing our relations to

95. "Critical Path," p. 278.
96. *Ibid.*, p. 310.
97. *Ibid.*, p. 334.
98. *Stubborn Structure*, p. 256.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the world and to ourselves. An idealist depreciation of everyday life not only embodies a vicious contempt for the actual humanity and struggles of real people, but, methodologically, signals a failure to locate the daily praxis that sustains reification, and, consequently, represents a total capitulation to it as an eternal principle.

Frye's awareness of the new historical problem of leisure dovetails with his educational philosophy. Neocapitalist leisure is socially manipulated to effect a dual reproduction of the person as a type of labor power shaped to the specific exigencies of neocapitalist production, and as a type of citizen shaped to the specific exigencies of the neocapitalist state. As long as our category is leisure (as in Frye) and not liberation of our productive powers and the world they create, we remain tied to this totalitarian cycle of reproduction. Guy Debord points out that "none of the activity stolen within labor can be rediscovered in the submission to its result;"[99] that is, leisure is dependent on its source, the rationality of production. In Frye, the alienated alternation of work and leisure is reproduced in the categorical duality of 'economic structure' and 'leisure structure' of society; and education becomes the content, the "positive aspect" of this leisure structure.[100]

The whole issue is unfolded in the abstract matrix indicated above, where the ideally educated mind is apparently aware that mid-century bourgeois society is "not the real form of human society, but the transient appearance of that society."[101] We have both an actual life and an imaginative life; the latter is the source of "the dignity and joy of life."[102] Heaven and Hell, it seems, both *are* this world—as it *appears* to an awakened or repressed imagination.[103] It can be argued, by contrast, that a truly awakened social imagination would not be content to preserve the actuality of the world. Instead, it would see it as a contradictory man-made Hell with potentials for Heaven, and would mediate its material transformation into a Heaven. A humanism that depends on inwardness to control meaningless empirical experience capitulates to the given society and renounces its claims to humanism by effectively denying humanity to the vast majority of mankind.[104] Frye's rationalism ignores that there are humanly objective (object-mediated intersubjective) conditions of existence independent of the *individual* will, and, ultimately, his theories reinforce the passivity he deplores. What had been in the romantic commotion an ontological bifurcation of the historical praxis into ideal and material realms has now become an epistemological problematic on an integrated ontological basis.

Frye's notion is that our cultural environment, formed by the real human society of the arts and sciences, is "the permanent model of civilization which

99. *Society of the Spectacle*, published as a special issue of *Radical America* IV:5 (1970), paragraph 27.
100. *Modern Century*, pp. 88-90.
101. "The Developing Imagination," p. 56.
102. Northrop Frye, *The Well-Tempered Critic* (Bloomington, 1963), pp. 154-156.
103. *Fearful Symmetry*, p. 83.
104. Cf. Georg Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (London, 1971), p. 191.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

our present society approximates." And the educated man "is the man who tries to live in his social environment according to the standards of his cultural environment."[105] Of course, he stresses, we can never attain in social life the social ideal implied in culture.[106] At the same time, "in a modern democracy, a citizen participates in society mainly through his imagination."[107] This whole conception of living in society according to the imagination is the ideological materialism of a magical spectacle, of living out in manipulated imaginative hypostasis the dreams and needs that are denied genuine socially organized material satisfaction.

And here we may return to the structure of the verbal universe. For Frye, since paradise is not in the outward environment but in the mind, it is a vision evoked by words. As a perspective, this means that "the only new worlds for man are those which the free and disciplined use of words can help to create."[108] And "every arrangement of words is a narrative, and so has a narrative shape, and a study of narrative shapes involves the study of literature." Myths of concern, specifically, as visions of society, "have literary shapes, generally romantic and comic shapes."[109] For Frye, that means Freudian shapes, and, as we know from his fatalistic typological ideology, they involve "a victory of the pleasure principle that Freud warns us not to look for in ordinary life."[110] By being freed of all historical determinations, literature had been assigned a technological form in a self-contained poetic universe—that is, an independent, neutral form adaptable to all content. Precisely by virtue of that independence, literature can become an integrated structural principle of the entire verbal universe. "Literature, conceived as a total structure, is not in itself a myth of concern: what it presents is the language of concern."[111]

In other words, in Frye's critical theory, literature becomes, like mathematics, "substantially useful, and not just incidentally so."[112] "The verbal structrues of psychology, anthropology, theology, history, law, and everything else built out of words have been informed or constructed by the same kind of myths and metaphors that we find, in their original hypothetical form, in literature."[113] Myth, for Frye, is the "source of the coherence" of social discourse, and "literature, like mathematics, is a language, and a language in itself represents no truth, though it may provide the means for expressing any number of them.... The mathematical and the verbal universes are doubtless different ways of conceiving the same universe."[114]

---

105. "The Developing Imagination," p. 57.
106. *Anatomy*, p. 348.
107. *Stubborn Structure*, p. 104.
108. *The Well-Tempered Critic*, p. 51.
109. "Critical Path," pp. 336, 337.
110. *A Natural Perspective: The Development of Shakespearean Comedy and Romance* (New York, 1965), pp. 75-76.
111. "Critical Path," p. 323.
112. *Anatomy*, p. 352.
113. *Ibid.*
114. *Ibid.*, p. 354.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This conception, which bears similarities with the language fetish of French structuralism, permits Frye a new examination of criticism as the decisive agency of cultural revolution. Criticism, it is argued, has two aspects, "one turned toward the structure of literature as a whole and one turned toward the other cultural phenomena that form its environment."[115] In this latter respect, it has a central role in the study of the society's production and use of its myths, in the interpretation of all symbolic systems[116] in terms of poetic language, and in attaining knowledge of the language of concern and belief.

In the first aspect, the study of art, Frye argues that "the contemporary development of the technical ability to study the arts...forms part of a cultural revolution." Frye adopts a crucial neocapitalist ideological position (surrendering permanently to alienation), that "it is the consumer, not the producer,...who becomes humanized." The consequence of this is that cultural production "may be, like ritual, a half-involuntary imitation of organic rhythms or processes" while "the response to culture is, like myth, a revolutionary act of consciousness." Thus criticism, which can facilitate and intensify consumption, is part of a revolution in "spiritual productive power."[117]

In the second aspect, the critical mission is even broader and more visionary: it is to supply the language to unify our experience on the level of the "higher intellectual universe." The social effect of critical activity is "reforging the broken links between creation and knowledge, art and science, myth and concept."[118] It is essential to recognize the total positivity of this program for cultural revolution. Oblivious to domination, exploitation, and struggle, to bureaucracy, power, hierarchy, property, the social division of labor, and revolutionary praxis, that is, to the social structures, social relations, and social collisions of real human history, Frye's conception remains within the existing structures of neocapitalism, and implies no more than, and no conflict with, actual developments in the integration of mental production and consumption. Ultimately it poses, at the given level of social development, only the standard problematic of order and unity typical in the modern tradition of critical theory: the fusion of the dissociated moments of culture and sensibility.

E. *Conclusion*

IN general, Frye's archetypal orientation is an expression of deepening reification. It is a dehistoricization and desocialization of life, ontologically a despecification. Paradoxically, the search for literary identity which, contrary to Ransom, Frye defines as the class, not the unique, expresses a loss of

115. "Critical Path," p. 275.

116. This does not apply only to verbal systems. Frye frequently reduces social action to anti-historical mythological form as symbolic drama. Literary criticism, it is claimed, can help to recognize symbolic patterns. Thus People's Park in Berkeley, for example, can be comprehended through the pastoral mode, the principle of the demonic, and the archetypes of the murder of Abel and the expulsion from Eden.

117. *Anatomy*, p. 344.

118. *Ibid.*, p. 354.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

identity, a loss of the specificity of personality in space and time, which means a loss of the ability to define identity through transformative activity. Ultimately, this is not only a loss but a supression of identity: a denial of the function of personality, of historical and cultural specificity. In fetishizing the reference to the *status quo ante*, Frye's theoretical position capitulates to the *status quo*. McLuhan moves on from there to embrace neocapitalist reification and to preach its dominant tendencies.

Freud, unlike Frye, was sharply critical of the repressive content of the cultural achievements that Frye accepts as the genuine forms of humanity. Frye's chief debt to Freud is the elimination of the future dimension. Yet Freud's important contribution was to have shown the concrete multiplicity of levels of signification. It is from this totality that Frye abstracts levels of permanence and universality in such a way that, in the end, he, and even more the epigones, systematize an unmediated simultaneity of abstract particularity and abstract generality. The result is especially congenial to both scientism and religion.

But the most decisive problem in the whole theory is formulating the relations between material life and imaginative life simply on an epistemological level. This problematic fails to locate culture as a whole way of life, and thus it does not provide theoretical space for moments in the formation of (rational and imaginative) consciousness within the process of the production and reproduction of everyday existence, at exploited work and at manipulated leisure. It involves no internal need to grasp objective mediations, and remains on a purely subjective (at best intersubjective) level. In consequence, praxis is unavailable to it, and reification is admitted as a level of nature. Therefore, when in our period technological progress realizes the imaginary, when the aesthetic merges with the political and the economic,[119] the theory can neither resist the change nor account for it, and necessarily yields to McLuhan's theory of a technology-dominated social-biological metabolism that permits virtually unlimited scope to reification on all levels and, by specifying myth and analogy as the fundamental epistemological and ontological structures, allows virtually unlimited rationalization.

119. Cf. Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (Boston, 1964), pp. 247-249.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Korsch's Political Development*

by Gian Enrico Rusconi

Writing in the mid-1930's from his London exile to his friend and disciple Paul Partos, Korsch described himself as "a Marxist in a general sense, critical, not bound to dogma." With only a touch of narcissism, such a definition would have applied to many intellectuals of the time. But in the Marxist Korsch there is an intransigence, a completeness, a sharpness which makes him an up-side-down orthodox. (This attitude comes from a life of political, intellectual and academic isolation, and his "rediscovery" in the middle 1960s is responsible for a series of interpretational equivocations that only now can be clarified.) This attitude permitted him not only to "protest when revolutionary theory degenerated to mere ideology, an ideological cover for an actually opportunist practice," but also to judge the political errors of the working class (both real and presumed) with utmost severity. In Korsch the concept of "autonomous proletarian action" is self-evident: it is defined by the negation of historical errors. When the proletariat acts, it becomes the constitutive subject of history. The absence or the defeat of this autonomous activity coincides with the formation of the "counter-revolution" as a totalizing reality.

This is the core of Korsch's political thought determining the more complex problematic of the relation between economics and politics not in the abstract, but as the economic and or political action of the working class and of its antagonist (be it called capitalism, fascism, or simply counter-revolution). From this viewpoint, Korsch's critique of Marxism as ideology, his whole theoretical argument must be re-evaluated. The following is a beginning of a reinterpretation of Korsch's work which confronts it with the only intrinsic criteria of criticism: its own political intentions.

Korsch's specific theoretical contribution to German Marxism is in the attempt to find within this ideology that which deals with the needs for action imposed by contemporaneous developments. In fact, in Korsch the tragic and uninterrupted sequence of errors and defeats of the German labor movement in the first half of the century is translated into a continuous indictment of the absence and inadequacy of its practical politics (or better, of the practice of its party and union agents) with respect to what should be authentic revolutionary "action." Only afterwards was there an indictment of the *theoretical* inadequacy of traditional Marxism for the labor movement.

This is the basic problematic that informs the evolution of Korsch's political thought: from an initial Fabian and social-democratic position to a phase of Leninist "orthodoxy" following the council experience. Subsequently, Korsch went through a debate within and against the Third

*English translation by Laurette Fiocchi and Wayne Heimbach.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

International and ended with ultra-left positions which signal his maturity, or at least his irreversable point of arrival.

Korsch's political work has documentary importance even for those who do not accept his political positions. As an extremist perspective which consistently filters through the political history of the German and European labor movement of the last half century, Korsch's political thought provides us the opportunity for historical reconsiderations.

Unlike the concept of counterrevolution that surfaces in Korsch beginning around 1923-24 (i.e., from the first strong censuring of his political development), the idea of autonomous proletarian action is present from when he started to pay attention to the pre-war union movements. We have analyzed elsewhere Korsch's theoretical and political analyses of the council movement;[1] here we will only outline the theoretical and political framework with which he tried to deal with the key experience of 1923—a framework developed during the preceding decade.

According to Korsch, the spontaneous expansion of proletarian action in the years 1918-19 had its fatal limits in its inability to organize effectively. Thus, Korsch's passage to Leninism came through his search for an efficient political organization. He had never embraced the "pure" council concept; he had never shared "spontaneous" visions of anarchism; he had, in fact, always kept in mind how much the masses in a modern economy were unprepared for self-management. To Leninism, however, Korsch had initially added a peculiar twist: he saw the theoretical and practical movement through the unorthodox eyes of revolutionary syndicalism. The masses' spontaneous movement for socialization also fell under the influence of syndicalism—a demand for the direct appropriation and management of production which broke from the traditional framework of the "conquest of power" on which the theoretical and practical orthodoxy of social-democracy had stagnated for decades. At the time Korsch wrote that no "political" means in this sense can be substituted in socialism for the proletariat's spontaneous action. It is symptomatic that in 1920 Korsch saw Leninism as capable of reconciling the "economic" spontaneity of the masses with "political" effectiveness. The centralized organization of the democratic soviets could reconcile the aspirations of workers' self-management with technical-productive necessities.

This kind of abstract reference to Leninism and to the soviets is a long way from any concrete grasp of their difficulties and contradictions. Moreover, in all of Korsch there does not seem to be a concept of politics that can comprehend the meaning of Leninist choices. The counterposing of "economic" action of the masses to "politics" constitutes a watered down and pragmatic conception of politics simply identified with a complexity of legal measures and institutional decisions from above. The concept of "economics"

1. For a consideration of this period, see my "La Problematica dei Consigli in Karl Korsch," in *Annali Feltrinelli*, Vol. 13 (Milan, 1974), pp. 1179-1230. Part of this essay appears in *New German Critique* 6 (Fall 1975), as "Introduction to Korsch's 'What Is Socialization?' " pp. 48-59.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

also remains ambiguous: on the one hand it seems to indicate the totality of the social structure—determined in a Marxist manner by the economic system—while, on the other hand, the economic system itself tends to be specifically identified with the conception and constitution of labor (*Arbeitsverfassung*) at different times. In the 1922 essay on "Labor legislation for factory councils" Korsch laid out a new labor "constitution" that the proletariat had to express and define in the struggle against the bourgeois conception. The proletariat would thus propose a different way of linking politics and economics and would also counterpose this to the formulation proposed by the bourgeoisie and accepted by Social Democracy.

This plan remains even after the disappearance of the desire to strategically use legislation in ideological struggle. In fact, in Korsch's concept of the economy the idea of objective laws of capitalism (which in part follows from the new socialist economics of transition) coexists with the idea of the necessity on the part of workers to fundamentally control, manage and change these laws. In this sense, the "economic" transformation qualifies the "political" substance of workers' action. The "German October" brought about a "pause" in Korsch's political evolution. The motives and consequences of this defeat (that saw the "workers' governments" of the SPD-KPD coalition of Saxony and Thuringia forced to resign in the face of army intervention on orders of the President of the Republic, the Social-Democrat Ebert), were discussed by Korsch himself in his speech at the Thuringian Provincial Council on February 28, 1924.

Korsch's discussion, as recorded in the stenographic reports of the meeting, compares the events and the different treatment meted out in Saxony and in Thuringia as opposed to Baveria where Hitler attempted his *coup d'etat*. What emerges is the outline of a Bavarian "fascism" in which Hitler and his companions have only a subalternate and contingent role in relation to the plans of "legal" authorities. Compared to the national fascist project of a march on Berlin, the supposed "terrorist" acts of the Saxon "proletarian centurians" (mainly composed of Social Democrats) were a mere pretext for embarrassing the labor governments of central Germany. This was seen as the first step towards the establishment of a "national" fascism headed by the army chief, von Seeckt. In Dorsch's words, we already have the whole theory of fascism as a direct expression of capitalist democracy and of Social Democracy as the "left wing of fascism." Mixed with these arguments, and with significant contradictions—we find the thesis of defending republican legality (along the line of the March 1922 workers' action against the Kapp putsch) when Social Democracy itself does not want to and does not know how to perform its democratic duty. Korsch continues: "I do not deny that the communists have not only pursued the objective of defending democracy against Bavarian fascism. ('Aha!,' interrupted Herfurth from the right, 'but also the creation of the council republic!'). Our historical aim is the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat; and to the enemy that confronts us, to the fascist attack that counts in the short run on using civil

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

war, we will respond with civil war. Violence against violence."[2] Korsch explains that if the communists do not lose the vision of their final objective, it does not mean that they foolishly expect or desire an immediate insurrection, like a gun shot (as, however, someone close to Hitler believes). Communists know that at the present time the proletariat is under a constant threat and must be permitted to defend itself not only with political and economic means, but also militarily.

Between the direct aggression of October 1923 and the new "legal" situation of February 1924 (when Korsch spoke) only the form and not the substance of fascism had changed. In fact, only "fascism" could save Germany from the total bankruptcy of 1923 (occupation of the Ruhr, superinflation, permanent state of siege)—not Hitler's fascism, but the legal fascism of Ebert and von Seeckt, the fascism of the politics of super-production and of the abolition of the eight-hour work day, the fascism of outlawing the Communist Party and of generalized repression against the revolutionary working class. If things suddenly became better after the repression, this resulted not from the miracle of "democracy," but rather signified that Germany had been placed in the context of fascism and international capitalism cloaked in democratic forms.[3]

Ignoring the growing impatience of the Provincial Council members, in particular of the Social Democrats who interrupt him with ever increasing frequency and harshness, Korsch goes on to brutally attack the Social Democrats themselves, calling them a "fraction of German fascism:" "With the excuse of choosing the lesser evil, the Social Democrats have supported all the infamies of the fascist dictatorship, and have promoted and used them in a criminal way against the proletariat itself."[4] While we cannot linger further on these impious attacks patiently endured by Korsch without reconstructing his analysis of the Social Democrats' activities of October-November 1923—an analysis that falls fatally behind that of the events of the November 1918 revolution—it is important to note how precocious Korsch's unremitting condemnation of Social Democracy was, as well as his thesis of the total and irreversable fascistification of bourgeois democracy. These ideas were grown on the terrain of experience and prior to the awareness of the more deviant expressions of Nazi totalitarianism (as, moreover, the denunciation of the counter-revolution in the Soviet Union did not foresee the Stalinist degeneration). These are political evaluations rooted in the basic mental processes of the author, and which filter and rigidly select every possible further experience.

For Korsch, fascism and counter-revolution are not politically and sociologically limited and limitable phenomena: they are exact responses to the workers' defeat. "True" fascism is the economic stabilization at the workers' expense—in particular through the abolition of the eight-hour day.

2. *Stenographische Berichte über die Sitzungen des III. Landtags von Thuringen*, Vol. I (Weimar, n.d.), p. 132.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 138.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 141.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The October-November 1923 experience modified the question of workers' autonomy only in the sense that it was no longer seen to move within a political vacuum (as in 1918-19) but in the presence of capital's counter-offensive. All of this, however, does not change the genesis and nature of workers' action. Concluding his violent reprimand against Social Democracy in the Thuringian Provincial Council, Korsch made an illuminating declaration: "No party, not even the Communist Party, can invent struggles against capital by magic....A party can tear away the obstacles, can do the prepatory work (for example, by destroying the illusions that workers still have about democracy and the character of social democracy), but the struggles themselves grow out of the economic situation and, in Germany, this must above all appear in the next years, one could say, with natural necessity."[5]

If we did not know of Korsch's hostility during these years toward Rosa Luxemburg, we would here be tempted to speak of his Luxemburgism. But, in reality, it is the council heritage that is clearly active. What is interesting is the claim of the "natural necessity" of the spontaneous rise of struggles from the "economic situation." We thus have the joining of an objectivist vision of the economy with an expectation of the subjective action of the class, the absence of which brings about the counter-revolution. This direct connection for the first time permits the distinction between revolutionary action and opportunist operation, and eventually facilitates an unpredictable twist: the denunciation of the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union as the restoration of capitalism and, therefore, as a counter-revolutionary operation.

The theme of workers' action acquires new meaning following the break with the official communist movement. Already on the first of May 1927 we read in the opposition journal *Kommunistische Politik* a significant renewal of the concept of union economic struggle as a moment of the "constitution of the proletariat as class."[6] Korsch's renewed interest in union action is not limited to a counterposition of revolutionary unionism (e.g., the Deutscher Industrie-Verband, for whose journal he worked) to reformist Social Democratic unions. The analysis of the behavior of unions introduces a more general argument concerning the "dialectical law" through which the forms of autonomy and development of the productive forces (which were the original meaning of unions) are transformed in the wake of the productive forces themselves. In the specific case, Korsch focuses on the monopolistic tendencies of the German Social Democratic unions—through the legal

5. *Ibid.*, p. 159.

6. "Die Wiederherstellung des Marxismus in des sogenannten Gewerkshaftsfrage," in *Kommunistische Politik* II:8 (1927), p. 106: "The true aim of the economic struggles that guide and always must guide the workers in the defense and in the betterment of their conditions of work and of life within the existing order of capitalist society does not consist in the more or less positive successes which could or in fact can be obtained, but in the constitution of the proletariat as a class, formed with the victories and defeats during and after these struggles."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

obligation of coalition—to represent all workers, and to make revolutionary unions illegal. With precise arguments, Korsch shows how reformist unions become trapped in a series of formal and substantial contradictions by limiting their actions to the economic field. Above all, from organs of struggle they become part of the apparatus of state repression. What Korsch condemns is the corporativization of the working class. They sacrifice their own autonomy for the illusion of having certain rights legally guaranteed through the state aparatus (forgetting that they obtained them only through struggle). Korsch saw this not only in Weimar Germany, but also in fascist Italy and Soviet Russia. This over-simplified wipes out any specific determination of the three different contexts and thus destroys any reasonable possibility of comparing them. Such extremism is possible only because, the identification of the proletariat as "productive force" (therefore as a constant, objective element of whatever kind of industrial system), also *postulates* it as an autonomous political *subject* antagonistic to the existing economy. Where the proletariat is present only as an economic element (in liberal capitalism, in fascist capitalism, and in countries with the dictatorship of the Stalinist party) it is inevitable that counter-revolution dominate on the political level regardless of the specific form it may take.

This is an interesting logical construction which, however, is totally abstract because instead of investigating and analyzing the historically determined reality of the proletariat it merely postulates it. It is not an accident that Korsch ends up with the abstraction of an "unavoidable historical necessity" whereby a form of "freedom" is translated into a "new constriction and lack of freedom." This "dialectic" culminates in a contrast between "freedom" and the "state."[7]

In Korsch's writings of this period (1930—the period of the *Anticritique*) the concept of freedom is not the democratic and liberal version. Even when he speaks of freedom of expression for the individual or for the group against the dictatorship of the party, he always means it as a choice for revolutionary radicalism. "Freedom" is the negation of every anti-revolutionary bond and ultimately of the state itself. Within this perspective it is clear how Korsch came to see the closing of the circle of counter-revolution against workers' freedom through the various links of the state or of "democratic," "fascist" or "soviet" para-state organizations.

Here it is useful to briefly consider the "Russian Question" which has already played too much of a part in the theoretical and political history of Korsch. In his Leninist phase, Korsch could not hide from the contradictions in terms of which Russia was debated as it emerged from "war communism."[8]

7. See "Das Problem Staatseinheit-Föderalismus in der französischen Revolution," in *Archiv für die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung* XV (1930), p. 144.

8. In Korsch's review of Lukács' book on Lenin we have a summary list emphatically presented from a bourgeois viewpoint: "the maintenance by the Bolsheviks of the old structure of the party, of the old 'antidemocratic' dictatorship of the party even after their 'return' to capitalism; a firm adherence to the duty of preparing and organizing the world revolution while the Russian proletarian state tries to push peace with the imperialist powers and to attract imperialist capitalism in the construction of Russia; the energetic ideological cleaning up and the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But Korsch saw these as contradictions whose "dialectical" solution was already present. Still more forced was the way in which the author, in reviewing Stalin's book on Leninism, confronted the thorny problem of the preeminent role of the Russian communists with respect to Western European communists whom they concidered "beginners in Leninism." This was explosive material that could not long be contained in such fragile verbal compromises.

What Korsch had to confront from 1925 on was a *constellation of facts* which, taken together, had an exploding effect. Above all, the so-called German and European economic and social "stabilization" signaling a period of rapid development was brusquely interrupted by the 1929 crisis which, for the Soviet state, coincided with the impelling necessity of economically taking off on the basis of an internal political equilibrium (in particular the relation between the working class and the peasantry) which to many no longer appeared to be "socialist." The factional and personality struggle is only one variable in the Russian political framework that was mistakenly elevated (both then and now) to the determining element in decisions that had their basic motivation in the objective dynamics of the new system. The substance of the clash in the Communist International lies in the interpretations and political reactions to this constellation of facts.

Korsch emphasized the factional struggle even though he presented it as the direct manifestation of the clash of objective interests. The winning faction (Bukharin, Stalin) was considered to be the voice of the specific interests of the "Russian people" before being the voice of the national interests of the Soviet state. Looking through Korsch's journal, *Kommunistische Politik*, we are struck by the fact that, in spite of the frequency of dates, information and socio-economic considerations, the center of the discussion is the ideological accusation of "revisionism," "opportunism," etc. There is a paradoxical recourse to orthodoxy precisely when there apears to be a concrete opportunity for the historical realization of Marxism. The "Russian question" puts Korsch on the spot: either he must accept the Russian activities as the practice of Marxism in a new context and recognize the absence of the mass action of the proletariat ("a clumsy giant unaware of its own strength") thus endorsing the almost exclusive political role of party and state, or else he must reject and condemn these realities on the basis of an ideological appeal to orthodoxy. This is a contradiction from which he will never free himself.

In spite of these shortcomings, Korsch's critical analyses of the idea of "socialism in one country," or the refusal to see the Soviet state as "the comprehensive totality of the world labor movement" rather than one of its parts, have lost none of their force. And essays such as the one on "The

organized strengthening of the proletarian party, while at the same time the political economy of the Soviet Republic is anxiously preoccupied with preventing any relaxing in the alliance with the peasants." Georg Lukács, *Lenin, Studie über den Zusammenhang seiner Gedanken*, in *Die Internationale* VII:12 (1924), p. 414.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Trotsky Question" even anticipate his political Jacobinism of the following years.

The same cannot be said of Korsch's interpretation of the "stabilization" of capitalism in Europe as an "opportunist" invention. At first sight it is incomprehensible how Korsch and others could deny the evidence of an economic and political stabilization of the Weimar Republic from 1924 on (something which Korsch easily admitted years later, in his historical retrospective writings). The ultra-left could point to serious structural disequilibria, the high rates of unemployment, the relative weakness and low standard of living of the working class. But this is not what interested Korsch. The logic of the diagnosis moves on a different level: in the catastrophic economic and social world situation, the stabilization was simply a political counteroffensive of capital.[9]

This ultrapolitical reading sacrifices any specific consideration of economic data for its final political significance. A schema which sees in the economy the objective necessity of collapse and in bourgeois politics the mere exercise of coercion and repression does not allow the proletariat to pose an articulate, realistic strategy,[10] but only the abstract necessity of revolutionary action. What is missing is the analysis of the specific development of the capitalist economic apparatus within the framework of liberal democracies in relation to fascism and, later, the *New Deal.* Consequently there is no specific point of reference through which the modern industrial proletariat subjectively *constitutes* itself. Labor is confronted with an impossible choice: adjust to the capitalist economy (which for Korsch is the choice of the Social Democracy and Stalinism); or—in the absence of direct actions of workers' self-management (which will partially appear in revolutionary Spain)—became a pure negation of the existing economy and of its state: "Whoever takes as a point of reference the means of production as they presently exist must logically not only renounce proletarian revolution in favor of capitalist reform, but finally must also capitulate to fascism." The context of this quote—the 1935 criticism of the program of the American Workers party—is somewhat more convincing, but the final result is the same.

Korsch's political vision in the early 1930's was so unrealistic that Hitler's coming to power and the rapid consolidation of the Nazi dictatorship did not shock him as it did many German Marxists. It is as if all of this was

9. In fact, the stabilization inaugurated with the Dawes Plan "is only the first step in the search for ways with which American and European capitalism and imperialism can try to take themselves out of their crisis and phase of depression by trying to bring about a higher organization of capital, by taking this step with the conquest of new markets and the more intensive exploitation of the old. All of these attempts are conditioned by the always greater exploitation and repression of the proletarian class. Only on the basis of a new defeat and repression of the proletariat can capitalism hope to prolong its life." Cf. Korsch, *Des Weg des Komintern, Plattform des Linken* (Berlin, 1926), p. 18.

10. Korsch and the "ultra-left," of course, proposed the "revolutionary control of production," the development of the movement of the unemployed and its connection with the general union struggle, the development of the movement of factory councils and of committees of control. But the vagueness of the proposal was such as to not really make it different from the slogans of official Communists or of the left wing of Social Democracy.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

discounted—including the persecution that he now underwent. The historical, sociological and psychological pecularities of National Socialism were absorbed in the total judgement of fascism as an epochal phenomenon. He nonetheless completed a detailed critical analysis of the *New Order of the Construction of Labor* which was published in 1933 by a Dutch group of international communists. Korsch's ultraleft position sought to differentiate itself from the official Communist party position during the 1930-33 period. According to Korsch, the communists fool themselves about the outcome of Nazism (as the last stage of capitalism to be followed by the proletarian dictatorship) in much the same way as Marx fooled himself at the time of the Bonapartist counter-revolution in France.[11] According to Marx's celebrated words the "true secret" of the Paris Commune consisted in the existence of government of the working class "produced by the class struggle of the producers against the appropriating class, the finally discovered form through which the economic liberation of labor could appear." In a similar way, all Marxist revolutionaries saw in the council system of revolutionary Russia the continuation of the Commune and the realization of socialism.[12]

Confronted with the flagrant contradiction between the name and the reality of the "Soviet Republic" Korsch is not satisfied with mere recriminations about its "betrayal" and "degeneration." It is necessary to understand and explain even by extending to working class organizations and ideas that historical dialectic whereby every form of the development of productive forces and revolutionary action reverses into chains of openness. Moreover, the Commune form was an invention of the bourgeoisie at the dawn of its own revolutionary process: it was a moment of its constitution as a class. Marx did not expect any miraculous result from the political form of the communal constitution as such, independent of its class content. It is precisely this indetermination of the communal "form" that lends itself to changes in class functions.

In his second essay on the Commune Korsch claims that in Marx there was a contradiction between the exaltation of the "finally discovered political form" of emancipatory workers' action and the indetermination and ambivalance of such a political form. If it is historically unquestionable that only the experience of the Commune convinced Marx of the necessity to

11. In "State and Counter-revolution," an essay that appeared in *Modern Quarterly* 2 (1939), we read (on page 65): "Small is the step of Marx's self-deception (and also Guizot and Proudhon) compraed to the great illusions cultivated by the German communists and their Russian patrons after Hitler's taking power in 1933. They saluted the victory of an open and non-falsified fascism over that which they up to then had described as a camouflaged and therefore more odious form of social fascism, i.e., the political predominance of the Social Democratic party. They predicted a rapid collapse of the new counter-revolutionary government that would lead to the proletarian revolution; they saluted their own defeat and the defeat of all the progressive tendencies in Germany and in Europe as a 'victory of communism'."

12. All of this is true—states Korsch in "Revolutionary Commune," *Die Aktion*, 5-8 (1929)—only historically. Today "we revolutionary militants of the proletarian class can no longer even subjectively continue to believe, without some verification and change, in the revolutionary significance of the council idea and of the revolutionary character of the council government whose direct continuation of the political form of the proletarian dictatorship was 'discovered' by the Paris communards a half a century ago."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

destroy rather than simply take over the existing structure of constituted power (as was expressed in 1864 in the "Inaugural Address' to the International Workers' Association), it is also true that he "steered away from propagandizing a regime such as the Commune as a political form of proletarian dictatorship." The "Address to the General Council" of the International Association (1871) was not considered an objective, detached evaluation of events, but something written by Marx not only to annex Marxism to the Commune, but also the Commune to Marxism. In polemics against the anarchists and federalists Marx was forced to directly or indirectly stress those centralist characteristics of the Commune incongruent with its true essense and to insist on merely formal differences (military, unity of executive and legislative power, recall of functionaries). Thus a huge confusion was created, not only concerning the correct interpretation of the historical Commune, but also concerning the positions and expectations regarding the "council" state. The mistaken conviction was created that there were "constitutional forms" which could avoid the repressive character of the state. Korsch also rejected the Leninist thesis that the state "of the majority of the people against their oppressers" is already the beginning of its own extinction. On this point Korsch was intransigent: up until the appearance of a classless society, the transitional state (both the transitional state conquered without radical transformations according to reformist illusions, and that state of a new type longed for by the Leninists) will be distinguished from the bourgeois state only through its class content and concomitant social function, not through its political form. As we read in another contemporary text: "As long as the proletarian class needs a state (i.e., for the whole period of revolutionary transition from capitalist society to communist society), the state of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat remains in its political form a bourgeois state."[13]

To the extent that one is prohibited from any positive prefiguration of the political structure of a future society and is careful to avoid every emphatic affirmation of proletarian creative sontenaity, Korsch could not go beyond the time bound reflection of the revolutionary political forms of the past. Consequently, bourgeois forms are more or less surreptitiously taken as models even within socialist ideology of a Marxist matrix.

Korsch reached this thesis through two roads: one, distinctly theoretical, is by reflecting on the Marx-Hegel relationship as "transference" of categories and concepts of the idealist dialectic (born with the bourgeois revolution into a theoretical framework that had to respond, however, to originally proletarian criteria. The other was the more precise outline of the individual "Jacobin" characteristics in the historical debate between federalists and unitarians during and in reference to the French Revolution.

If the unitarian centralized state is the final result of the struggles of the bourgeois against classes hostile to it, then the contrary is false: i.e., that the federalist principal is automatically the overcoming of the bourgeois state.

13. "Das Problem Staatseinheit," *op.cit.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

History teaches us the extent to which the federalist principal is regressive. It is not an accident that revolutionaries of a federalist persuasion, like Proudhon, had to give up this prejudice in order to save the contents of the revolution in centralism. Another typical error (of an historicist variety) is that of assuming the type of state ultimately posed as the criteria of evaluating the revolution and its meaning. Korsch, on the contrary, maintained that it was necessary to start from the contradiction between the "revolutionary movement" and the resulting "factual result." This is the true contradiction that infests the revolution, not that between "politics" and "economics" as even some Marxists insist. Far from being opposed to the Jacobin bourgeois idea of the state this idea complements it. And, in effect, a large part of French and European socialism has seen itself as the "social and economic complement" of the 1793 Constitution, almost as if it was merely a matter of extending within the economic and social sphere a democracy already begun on the political level. Marx and Lenin broke with this tradition and proclaimed the need for a "new" proletarian state; "but the essential difference between this new state of the proletarian dictatorship and the Jacobin bourgeois dictatorship is still in its ends, its functions, its managers—in brief in its economic and social essense—and not at all in any difference in its political form."[14]

Yet, Korsch did not want to provide a version of the proletarian state different from that of Marx and Lenin: he only wanted to warn about its nature. Moreover, the need of destroying the old state had been indicated sufficiently in the development of the great bourgeois revolution, by Sieyes, Brissot, Robespierre, Saint-Just, and the nameless leaders of the 1792 communard insurrection. But there is more. The Marxist conception of the state as "organized and centralized social violence" used by the bourgeoisie against the proletariat, but also usable by the proletariat in a different sense against its own enemies, presupposes the existence of a state which is "classless" in its political form. Here again is Robespierre's Jacobin conception expressed in a famous discourse at the Convention when he spoke of "an unsheathed dagger that shines in the hands of the assassin as in the hands of the hero of freedom." Such a state embodies the contradiction of the revolution as such. Unlike in bourgeois doctrine, however, this contradiction does not obtain between a revolutionary and an antirevolutionary party or, as in traditional Marxist doctrine, between economy and politics. It obtains, rather, "in the immanent movement of the revolution itself considered in a conscious, activist and subjective way."[15] But despite this Korsch continued to work with these two methods of conceiving the political contradiction: the relation between revolution and counter-revolution, and the relation between politics and economics. In this regard, his 1935 critique of the American Workers party program deserves close scrutiny.[16]

14. *Ibid.*, p. 139.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 143.
16. The American Workers Party was initiated by the Conference of Progressive Labor Action which split from the American Federation of Labor in 1929. At the end of 1933 it formed

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Korsch appreciated in the program the refusal to be enchanted by the *New Deal* which clearly contained semi-fascist elements, and the rejection of the American concept of politics in favor of a "workers' state founded on workers councils, taken as the democratic instrument for resolving the contradictions of the capitalist system and for moving into the transition to a communist society." He noted that the economic platform of the AWP considered the existing crisis—even if provisionally resolvable—to be the beginning of the end of capitalism. But Korsch objected that it lacked a serious analysis of the concept of "planned economy" and of its capitalist-fascist characteristics, while positively evaluating planning in the USSR and the future planning in the "new society." It was symptomatic of the program that, instead of being a "revolutionary attack on capital in its totality," it turned out to be a promoter of partial attacks.

Although Korsch's critical approach was guided by the usual schematism of negative orthodoxy, he made some interesting points concerning economics. He located the basic problem of the program in the way in which the central contradiction of the capitalist system was condemned. Specifically it spoke of the contradiction between a "productive apparatus" that was potentially capable of satisfying the fundamental needs of humanity and the "system of social relations" that hindered this satisfaction. For Korsch this meant a departure from the Marxist contradiction between "productive forces" and "productive relations" that immediately translated into a contradiction and struggle between the possessing class and the proletariat. By locating the contradiction in "distribution" in the hands of bad capitalist management, i.e., by saving "production"—the program forgot how much the latter is absolutely fundamental to capitalist "distribution." It forgot that in the present mode and division of labor the worker is one with the machine, and the army of unemployed is one of the determining functions of this apparatus. To accept the present mode of production means not only to reject revolution, but also to capitulate to fascism. Only the "strong state," in fact, was capable of confronting the crisis generated by unregulated market competition and by workers' rebellion. The strong state was capable of defending the capitalist system not only against workers but also against individual capitalists and groups. This was recognized not only by the petty bourgeoisie, even when suffering under fascism, but also by a wide popular strata both worker and lumpen.

Naturally the dynamic and extension of this potential popular consensus to the counter-revolutionary state did not interest Korsch. He was mainly concerned with indicating the inconsistency of this state because of the existence of the working class: "the largest productive force." Yet, this did not provide a sufficiently precise determination for the general denomination of workers in basic industry.

---

a provisional committee which included intellectuals such as Sidney Hook and James Burnham. In 1934 it came out with a program called "Toward an American Revolutionary Labor Movement. Program of the American Workers Party."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Examination of that part of the program dedicated to union activity was the occasion for renewal of the discussion of the so-called primacy of politics over economics which—Korsch claimed—at best had a revolutionary-Jacobin twist (Lenin), and at worst a radical-bourgeois one (Social Democracy). The formula with which the AWP repeated this error in its program involved the subordination of all "mass organizations" to the political activity of the party, including even unions, whose peculiar character in regard to other organizational forms was not recognized.[17]

Following this logic, the German and European experience became the negative model for the history and destiny of the non-European labor movement. The overcoming and the synthesis of economics and politics, claimed one-sidedly by Leninism and syndicalism, could be realized only in effective revolutionary action. This is the lesson that will be learned some years later in Spain, even if Korsch had to reproach the CNT and the FAI for the opposite error: the underevaluation of the political moment in the course of revolutionary action.

The encounter with the American world began with hopes based, above all, on the development of the exact and social sciences. Unfortunately, it turned out to be sterile even from a political and an academic viewpoint. In a letter from Korsch to his friend Partos we read: "As far as I am concerned I have unfortunately been unable to finish anything even in this country. This time the fault lays with my own indolence and my aversion to realistic behaviour, characteristics which you know well and are much worse now than when I was in Germany and in the European exile."[18] These subtle psychological self-interpretations show only part of Korsch's problems. Much more importantly, his sense of frustration came from a theoretical framework based on a now closed universe of experiences and, moreover, forced to move in a self-critical and depressive spiral. It is not accidental that, in a letter of some weeks later, we find formulated a thesis introducing one of the dominent themes of his American exile.[19] We read: "the whole labor

17. On the new program of the AWP, see *International Council Correspondence* 4 (1935), p. 24.

18. The letters quoted here are from a selection collected by M. Buckmiller and Götz Langkau in *Jahrbuch—Arbeiterbewegung. Theorie und Geschichte*, ed. C. Pozzoli, Vol. 2 (Frankfurt am Main, December, 1974); the particular quote here is from a letter dated June 12, 1939, on page 218. The first issue of the *Jahrbuch* of December, 1973 was completely dedicated to Karl Korsch. [Cf. Douglas Kellner's review in this issue of *Telos*.]

19. Naturally we should not forget that between 1934 and 1938 one of Korsch's central preoccupations was the draft of his book *Karl Marx*. This was a work *sui generis* for the "cultivated bourgeois public" (as he wrote to Mattick on May 10, 1935) also meant to introduce him into the American academic world. On this point, however, Korsch is rather ambivalent. On the one hand, he was not disposed to abandon, for opportunist reasons, any of his "revolutionary" positions (the refusal to openly criticize Marx, as he was then doing in radical left journals, is a sign of this attitude). On the other hand, his concern for American social sciences was authentic and corresponded to a deep-seated scientist-pragmatic bent. He particularly cultivated relations with his psychologist friend, Kurt Lewin (whom he had known since the 1920s when Lewin had published a piece on socialization in a series edited by Korsch). The fruit of this collaboration was the report made in 1939 at the Fifth International Congress of the "Unity of Science." Korsch also had frequent contact with members of the Frankfurt School, then in exile, especially with Pollock and Horkheimer. The contact with the latter seemed to have as its aim possible collaboration on

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

movement of the past in all of its forms has really only prepared the internal progression of capitalism, brought to a counter-revolutionary form by 'fascism,' but developed and assured on the world level by all of the capitalist systems." History has stopped under the sign of the world counter-revolution. But it is Korsch's own discussion that has stopped. The war against Nazism, far from opening new perspectives, is only "a further gigantic step toward the fascistification of Europe, if not the whole world." This is a recurrent theme in Korsch's writings of these years. The logical schema of the 1920s is exasperatingly repreduced, including the postulate of antagonistic worker action. Also reproduced were the contradictions or, at least, the serious doubts. On the one hand, he was sure that "the secret of the war" was its totalization which would create the premises for the political and social power of the "workers in uniform and therefore of the whole working class." On the other hand, however, he recalled that bourgeois wars always ended in counter-revolutionary imperialism and that therefore the proletarian struggle would have to wait till the end of the war. In a context dedicated to discussing the counter-revolution in the Soviet Union he did not hesitate to speculate about a pure and simple "mass insurrection against Stalin."

What is most interesting is how Korsch's reflections on Marx evolved up to the 1950 theses on Marxism without any political perspectives. Here Korsch's letters to Paul Partos are crucial. In a letter dated April 26, 1935 (from London) we read that according to Korsch "today it is not possible to make positive predictions concerning tomorrow's actions." Naturally a theoretician can always attempt predictions that have practical relevance, as Sorel did decades earlier. But Sorel could still look at a labor movement, although in decline, and a bourgeois tradition not yet destroyed. In today's situation, especially in the United States, everything depends not on 'the subjective' but on the course of a crisis in the sense of the most vulgar economism. In another letter four years later (July 26-29, 1939) we have a more precise political description: "Here in the U.S. everything is still prehistory and certainly the prehistory of a great and radical history. There are no points of contact. Here one can do and say wrong and incomprehensible things, if one does not want to be hemmed in and have a very limited part in the labor of Sysiphus against the poisoned action of the Communist Party. But in this way one can with difficulty avoid provoking the struggle of bourgeois intellectuals against the working class. The same is true for revolutionary union work. If one wants to fight the closed shops or other 'fascist elements,' or even only the more strident corruption and the monstrosity of the bureaucracy against the workers themselves, one would inevitably act *for* the bourgeoisie and capital *against* the working class."[20]

---

a book on the "dialectic" (which was to be *Dialectic of the Enlightenment*). This project was never carried out as planned. Korsch kept contact with other institutions and American universities, but except for brief and salutary collaboration and funding, he was not fully received in the academic world. The fact that he was considered a serious Marxist (something which deep down flattered him) was one of his academic handicaps.

20. In *Jahrbuch*, Vol. 2, *op.cit.*, p. 225.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Korsch reiterated this depressing judgement for Europe when he talked about the chances of "workers resistence" in Spain at the conclusion of the ill-fated civil war: "Your [Partos] opinion of better chances for a resistance organization in Spain, rather than in Germany or Italy, is rather interesting. But I believe that in a short time everything will lead only to the repetition of a tragic strangulation. Great revolutionary energy, valor and the preoccupation of the part of Spanish workers to avoid every error is not enough. It is almost better not to do anything before the relations at the European level are not profoundly changed."[21]

In a subsequent letter (the one of July 1939) Korsch attempted more general explanation of the workers' failure ("I believe that it is possible to single out 'the unsuccessful solution of the duties of the revolutionaries' of the last twenty years in the fact that they wanted to and had to try a road that represented more than a simple ideal 'completion' of the Communist Party. The only effective historical contribution in his sense was furnished by the Spanish anarchists but you know very well how brief and painful that was."[22]

These historical and political judgments were accompanied in the letter by more general theoretical considerations. In response to some of Partos' statements about "new political forms" that he saw in the new capitalism, Korsch responded: "why just 'political?' It seems to me that 'the economics' always becomes the main and dominent element of all political forms. The 'birth of a conscious mature and revolutionary reaction of the working class' is not part of my image of the future (an image that, naturally, is not clearer nor more complete than yours; today one has only to choose among three clear but undoubtedly mistaken and old ideas, and a certain confusion, of the near future."[23]

The more pessimestic vision of Korsch the "teacher" with respect to Partos the "disciple" did not prevent Korsch from often taking positions in favor of Marxism, of its method and of its *Weltanschauung* as against Partos' too destructive and negative critique. An earlier letter (November 25, 1935) written when Korsch was working on his *Karl Marx*, contains confessions and statements which shed important light on the tempo and mode of development of Korsch's whole thought: "As you know, in my orthodox period I always claimed that the revolutionary kernal of Marx's economic theory was in its 'critique,' i.e., within the critical dissolution of bourgeois 'political economy' by its nature. . . . In my last lessons of Winter 32-33 I have changed my viewpoint a little. I have shown how modest—if looked at very closely—is the critical contribution as opposed to *Capital*'s main economic content, how little developed were the critical points and how a real critique even of classical economy was traceable only in the first volume of *Capital*, edited by Marx himself, while the manuscripts worked on and edited by Engels and Kautsky (second and third volume of *Capital*; *Theories of Surplus*

21. *Ibid.*, p. 218 (letter of June 12, 1939).
22. *Ibid.*, p. 226.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 222.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Value) show Marx only as a critic of vulgar economics and actually as a faithful desciple and follower of classical economics in the details of money, income, etc. I, however, made Marx's practical and theoritical positions towards *politics* as the starting point of my distinction 'between that which is alive and that which is dead' in Marxism. There was a connection between the bourgeois character of Marx's politics and the would-be continuation of the critical dissolution of bourgeois economics into a science directly social and therefore into a praxis directly revolutionary."[24] Korsch continues that, approaching proletarian revolutionary theory through the French Communists and Proudhon, during the 1848-49 events Marx behaved as a radical democrat, neglecting the "autonomous demands of the working class and workers' organizations." Even in the following years, while accepting blanquist concepts and slogans, he accented the aims of the revolutionary proletariat in an exclusively "political" sense. The theoretical twist was: "Marx certainly developed the *historical* critique of the economic categories well (and Sorel went too far when he challanged this) but he proclaimed the 'overcoming' of economics into a *directly social* science only in the abstract instead of actually bringing it about. This is apart from some cues (for example, politics—concentrated economics; violence is itself an economic power) which are often freely cited by Marxists as a tranquillizer of the revolutionary conscience—cues which show in a rather crude manner the maintenence of the contrast in 'normal' scientific treatment. Even here theory corresponds to praxis: political party and 'economic' struggle of unions integrated into a 'totality' through the political guidance of the revolutionary party. From the point of view of historical characterization one could say that the radicalization of the political struggle through economics and the indication of the 'political' character of property are genuinely jacobin."[25]

These two passages are too important (also for a critical rereading of *Karl Marx*) not to be quoted in full. Through the critique of Marx we have as a consequence the possible positive contents of Korsch's political perspective ("possible" since, as we have seen, they were far from any actualization).

To the Jacobin matrix of Marx's political position was imputed the premature arrest of the theoretical critique of the economic categories of bourgeois science and, therefore, the failure to develop a "directly social science" which would have corresponded to a revolutionary social practice in the proletarian sense. The latter was sacrificed by Marx in 1848-49 when everything was taken in a bourgeois revolutionary dynamic that in a Jacobin way subordinated "economic" contents and struggle to the "political" struggle.[26]

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 160-161.
25. *Ibid.*, pp. 161-162.
26. As Korsch put it in his 1938 essay, "Marxism and the Present Task of the Proletarian Class Struggle," in *Living Marxism* 4 (1938), p. 118: "From beginning to end Marx defined his concept of class in terms which were ultimately political and in acts—if not in words—he subordinated most of the activity developed by the masses in their daily struggle to the activity developed by the political leaders in their own interests."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But why this sacrifice of workers' autonomy by Marx who just prior to the revolutionary explosion and given, with the *Manifesto*, the theoretical and political foundation to the new labor movement? Why did Marx renounce a program of proletarian revolution—certainly utopian—for a no less utopian mythology based on bourgeois concepts of "revolutionary democracy," "revolutionary war" against Russia, etc.? Korsch did not offer any explanation other than the persistent Jacobin heritage that carries on the misunderstanding of the significance and dimensions of the "counter-revolution" following necessarily the workers' defeat. In the 1948 essay entitled "Marx's Position in the 1848 European Revolution" we read: "The thesis, according to which the politics of Bonapartist and Bismarckian counter-revolution are to be seen as a simple continuation of the preceding revolutionary development, has met with much agreement in the following period, not only with bourgeois historicans, but also with Marxists and other socialist theoreticians—and certainly not among the worst." The consequences of this ambiguous position are found in the polemic between Marx and Lassalle, and later between Marx and Liebknecht on the one hand and Lassalle and Schweitzer on the other. In fact, Lassalle and Schweitzer wanted to come to a tactical alliance with counter-revolutionary power based on the revolutionary possibilities implicit in the counter-revolution. According to Marx who recognized the progressive character of certain concessions granted by the reaction to the workers against the bourgeoisie, the workers' party should not in any way negotiate its own autonomy with the reaction.

But, in spite of all the criticisms, Marx remained a positive reference point for Korsch, not only because he was the author of the *Manifesto* and the enemy of every tactical "conciliation" of Lassalle (something directly connected to the judgment made about it in the far-away 1922) but most of all because Marx's economic analysis of capitalism was still valid. While criticising Marx the politician, in a letter to Partos Korsch states that: "since the capitalism of today and tomorrow, while very different from what it was at the beginning, is still 'capitalism,' one can still call the theory and practice of the one movement really anti-capitalist, with all its necessary changes, socialism-communism-marxism."

We are thus once again confronted with orthodoxy versus the economic lessons of Marxism which plays an ambivelent if not contradictory role in Korsch's complex evaluation. From this viewpoint, it is possible to provide a careful interpretation of the "Ten Theses on Marxism Today (1950)."[27] By themselves and outside of the context of the development of Korsch's thought, these theses announce a radical relativization of Marxism. In reality they are an extreme formulation of the previously outlined complex problem. If the theses are seen as the definitive formulation of Korsch's criticism of Marx, many things in his published and yet unpublished writings could not be understood (for example, a typewritten manuscript of 1952 in which the

27. Now in *Telos* 26 (Winter 1975-76), pp. 40-41.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Leninist concept of "unequal development" of capitalism was positively evaluated).[28] Also incomprehensible would be the "dream" of his last years formulated in a letter to Ruth Fischer, and repeated to Erich Gerlach in December 1956: "I am always taken by my dream: to restore theoretically the 'ideas of Marx' apparently destroyed after the conclusion of the Marx-Lenin-Stalin episode."

The "restoration" of Marxism is not a philosophical, but a political problem. It is the recreation of a political theory of revolutionary activity for advanced industrial societies having as its objective the "planned intervention in the economic structure of all the classes currently excluded." It is the only way to link up with the heritage of historical Marxism[29] irreversably filtered through the experiences of classical, Weimar Social Democracy and Leninism-Stalinism. Korsch criticized the "monopolistic" pretentions of Marxism, as historically codified for interpreting and guiding proletarian action. The latter is historically and politically more comprehensive than historical Marxism, forged as it is by peculiar and unrepeatable experiences. Not without contradiction and paradox, Korsch's attempt consisted in carrying this thesis to extreme consequences; not through an alternative theoretical and political discourse, but by remaining faithful to "Marx's ideas" even if necessary, against Marx himself.

28. This manuscript of only a few pages is only one of many preserved by the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam. These are fragmentary works and of a brief range (except for 30 pages of an essay titled "Buch der Abschaffungen") which testify more to the tormented stage of Korsch's last reflections than to a real and proper development of his thought.

29. "A critique absolutely pertinent to the Leninist and, above all, to the Stalinist concepts cannot really be put forward by Korsch because the most important question touched on here, in which all the difficulties of his thought are concentrated (i.e., the constitution of the objects and of the objectivity of experience, mediated by historical praxis) was not developed in its formal aspect even by Marx, and therefore cannot be done by Korsch." This is the central thesis of Negt's essay "On the Problem of Constitution in Korsch," *Telos* 26, *op.cit.*, pp. 120-142. Negt puts forth an interesting case which, however, does more to develop the problem that Negt was working on —interpreting the extensive theoretical needs of the German New Left—than to provide an adequate criterion for interpreting Korsch. Negt's critical contribution revolves around two axes: the problem of the formation of the proletarian experience and the determination of praxis as the totality of production and class struggle—everything from the viewpoint of proletarian subjectivity. He readily shows how Korsch's contribution on the proletariat as productive force remains completely within the "already constituted," i.e., with regard to the analysis of how, in the concrete, the proletariat constitutes itself. Negt, however, did not develop a political analysis. Except for the recognition of the "constitutive" value of the organized struggle, his basic preoccupation is that of affirming the existence of a specifically proletarian "experience," of "vital proletarian contexts" and therefore of a science capable of seizing them. But does the proletarian science demanded by Negt, who uncritically postulates the existence of a "proletarian experience" counterposed to "bourgeois experience" anticipating on the categorical level that which should be the very nucleus of the investigation, resolve the problems eluded by Korsch? If "the class struggle is only one form of the objective constitution and not even the preeminent one within commodity production," if the struggle moves in an objective-institutional context "preconstituted" by the capitalist mode of production and bourgeois domination anticipating the alternative proposals, what are the theoretical and practical consequences leading beyond Korsch's impasse? At this point Negt's discussion vacillates. Thus, on the level of strategy and political theory we find in Negt the same postulation as in Korsch as the world-historical "actuality" of "revolution" even if it is not on the agenda. This is a "contradiction to understand and to take to its practical and organizational consequences;" and Korsch—according to Negt—should be useful in this respect.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Lenin and the Problem of the Transition*

by Ulysses Santamaria and Alain Manville

Hegel noted the ruse of reason. He followed its path in the unfolding of mind in the matrix of history. In turn, the Russian revolution came to embody one of its most exemplary instances. The first people in the world to lead their own glorious revolution would, in the space of a few years, find themselves under the most despotic regime that history has known. Because of this reversal, it is necessary to find a reason for this tragic history, to fix its origins, to examine the reasons for the ruse, and finally, to display the contradiction.

This contradiction already can be read in what Marx proclaims of socialism and in how Lenin replies to him. It can also be read in the distance which separates the Marxism bequeathed to us by Marx and Engels from what Lenin accomplished as a system-builder during the first five years of the government of the soviets. Too often this difference is assigned to specific historical conditions. Thus, Lenin would be the obligatory victim of the practical application of an ideal which does not allow itself to be enclosed by the hard and constraining reality of a world to be changed in one moment. In brief, Lenin becomes the practical conscience of the revolution, as Marx had been its theoretical conscience. Such a picture follows the familiar historical mystification, all the more difficult to penetrate since Lenin attacked and broke with all of those who deformed Marxism by reducing it to a flat reformism and to a petty bourgeois ideology.

Against this traditional view, we will try to show that, far from being able to embrace a theoretical solidarity between Marx and Lenin, a difference of a theoretical order emerges which is the sign of two opposed doctrines. The insight of Marx's critical work, especially his concept of the negative, is no longer present in Lenin. Indeed, Lenin is allied to the theoretical bases of those whom he fought politically. In the last analysis, his revolutionary theory is constructed on the economic ground of the theoreticians of the Second International; consequently, the break with their mechanistic and evolutionary materialism has not been undertaken in its entirety. Lenin, in effect, will formulate a problematic of transition in which the movement of history, even in its most brutal ruptures, will be conceived as a development of productive forces, objective structures anchored in social matter with intrinsic principles of emergence for new relations of production.

If he did not develop theoretically any schema of transition, despite works like *State and Revolution* (the majority of his texts between 1917 and 1921 being polemical or programmatic), Lenin nevertheless practically produced this theory. One does not find it in a pure theoretical state, but it is present in

*Translated from the French by Margaret Blades.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

each of his texts; it is what sustains his political and social analyses; it is what supports his political practice. Althusser noted it in *For Marx*, "...the meaning of these texts of Lenin's (on the revolution of 1917) is not a simple description of a given situation, an empirical enumeration of various paradoxical or exceptional elements: on the contrary, it is an analysis of theoretical scope."[1] It is this theory about questions of transition that we will attempt to bring to light in this discussion.

A Preformationist Thesis

Lenin presents socialism as the effect of suppressing a certain number of contradictions within the capitalist structure. It is the reordering of an historical process which is increasingly subject to waste, to plunder and to murder. In this regard, the experience of the imperialist war was quite revealing for him. The historical necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat became legible in the chaotic reality illuminated by the massacres of war. Plainly, the imperialist war is symptomatic of the contradiction between the great development of productive forces, the increasingly social character of production and the mode of appropriation which remains imprisoned by the narrow limits of private ownership. It has, obviously, forced the appearance of the deep contradiction between productive forces and the relations of production. War shows that capitalist relations of production have become incapable of insuring the development of the productive forces without catastrophies. This incapacity, for Lenin, is the very essence of the current situation. The premises of socialism are discernible in the bosom of capitalist society; in the stage of imperialism there exist, at the same time, the objective and subjective conditions for the passage to socialism. Beyond this catastrophic view of capitalist development, something more essential acts and is played out. What surrounds this view at the beginning of the twentieth century is an entire problematic, a total theorization of capitalism and, correlatively, of socialism.

In "The Impending Catastrophe," Lenin attempts to analyse the originality and specificity of monopoly capitalism and writes: "Imperialist war is the eve of socialist revolution. And this not only because the horrors of war give rise to proletarian revolt—no revolt can bring about Socialism if the economic conditions for it are unripe—but because state-monopoly capitalism is a complete material preparation for Socialism, the prelude to Socialism, a rung in the ladder of history between which and the rung called Socialism there are no intermediate rungs."[2] The exact meaning of this assertion becomes clear in the rest of the same text in which Lenin states: "But Socialism is now gazing at us through all the windows of modern capitalism; Socialism is outlined directly, practically, by every important measure that constitutes a forward step on the basis of this modern capitalism."[3] Since 1848, Marx affirmed that capitalism was the material preparation for socialism; however,

1. Louis Althusser, *For Marx*, trans. B. Brewster (N.Y.: Vintage, 1969) pp. 177.
2. Lenin, *Selected Works*, (Moscow, 1947) Vol. II, p. 114.
3. *Ibid.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Lenin perverts this affirmation by transforming it into another formula: imperialism provides the material basis for socialism.

Yet, how are we to understand the fact that he presents us with imperialism as a decaying capitalism, if what constitutes its foundation, its basic structure, already belongs to socialism? This apparent contradiction is raised with recognition of the distinction that it creates, on the one hand, between socialized productive forces and, on the other hand, the relations of production which still are attached to private ownership. What can be ascribed to imperialism, capitalism in agony, is not the economic structure which Lenin assimilates into the productive forces, but rather the relations of production which hinder the development of these forces.

This schema is only the displaced repetition of the infrastructure superstructure relation. Following Kautsky, Lenin identifies productive forces with the economic infrastructure which announces and prefigures socialism, and relations of production with a superstructure which simply must be destroyed through the expedient of the state in order to allow those forms to unfold according to their acknowledged positivity.

Paradoxically, Lenin, who strives to show, against Kautsky and his consorts, that imperialism is not the simple superstructure that capitalism would adopt at a certain moment of its development, falls back into a theorization about the ultimate stage of capitalism in which imperialism is nothing more than a superstructure swept away by revolution. He can write: "Let us first of all take the most concrete example of state capitalism... It is Germany. Here we have 'the last word' in modern large-scale capitalist engineering and planned organization, subordinated to *Junker-bourgeois imperialism*. Cross out the words in italics, and in the place of the militarist, Junker, bourgeois, imperialist state put also a state, but of a different social type, of a different class content—a Soviet state, that is, a proletarian state, and you will have the sum total of the conditions necessary for socialism."[4]

This view of the relationship between productive forces and relations of production is predialectical. Productive forces and relations of production are set in a relation of exteriority; yet, the relation which binds them is extrinsic. The contradictory organic unity, whose analysis Marx had worked out, finds itself reduced to a contradiction of two elements exterior to one another. In fact, productive forces are not affected in their essence, in their foundation by the ties which "unite" them to the relations of production. The separation which Lenin institutes between productive forces and relations of production obliterates and suppresses the specificity of the productive forces and of the relations of production as theoretical concepts. This dissociation redistributes the two terms according to the paradigmatic axis of the infrastructure and superstructure; with the infrastructure withdrawn from all class character, rooting itself in the materiality of nature, the productive forces become hypostasized. Lenin refers them back to the positive objectivity of matter. This objectivity constitutes them no longer as forces of a social production,

4. Lenin, *Collected Works* (Moscow, 1965) Vol. 32, p. 334.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but as natural forms and forces, as a positive force of nature, by reference to the naturalness of matter. What then belongs to the social? Are the reference to the naturalness of matter. What then belongs to the social? Are the relations of production, while productive forces receive an autonomy and an independence with regard to capital, exactly like science or technology? Clearly, it is this autonomization which authorizes the understanding of transition on a naturalized, positive base.

One can read the model of this redistribution according to the axis of infrastructure and superstructure, conceived in mechanistic relationships, in a text in which Lenin compares Germany, a nation of state capitalism, and Russia, a society of soviets with centralized means of production. He observes: "And history...has taken such a peculiar course that it has given birth in 1918 to two unconnected halves of socialism existing side by side like two future chickens in a single shell of international imperialism. In 1918, Germany and Russia had become the most striking embodiment of the material realization of the economic, the productive and the socio-economic conditions for socialism, on the one hand, and the political conditions, on the other."[5]

What Lenin would like us to read in the metaphor, is the genetic and almost natural descent from the old to the new social order, even if a violent act is necessary for the birth of the prodigal child: socialism. The organic relation between capitalism and socialism poses the contradiction between productive forces and relations of production, as the contradiction between a content and a form. What is realized by this violent act of revolution is the liberation of productive forces that the shackles of capitalism merely tied down, and the opening-up of the possibility for these productive forces to unfold harmoniously by developing the relations of production for communist society: "The expropriation will facilitate an enormous development of productive forces. And seeing how capitalism is already retarding this development to an incredible degree, seeing how much progress could be achieved even on the basis of the present level of modern technique, we are entitled to say with the fullest confidence that the expropriation of the capitalists will inevitably result in an enormous development of productive forces of human society."[6]

This dialectic of content and form by which form becomes the obstacle of content, is only another name for an evolutionist mechanism in which form and content are conceived in unilateral connections (a content producing a form without being affected by it, or only outwardly). Still, since Hegel, we know that matter and form give birth to each other reciprocally. The absence of internal connections between a content and its form implies an historical view of the process of transition which simply repeats the metaphor in question. Here we have in a condensed form the whole problematic of the relation of capitalism to socialism which will govern Lenin's analysis of the transition.

5. Lenin, *Ibid.*
6. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 206.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Germany is the infrastructure of socialism, Russia the superstructure; Lenin's task will be to fuse the two elements, to realize their unity. He states, "And if we had an integral imperialism before us...a system in which everything would have been subordinated to finance capital alone. It would then only have remained to remove the top and to transfer what remained to the proletariat."[7] The infrastructure and the economy are the productive forces, what Lenin calls modern technology and planned organization. The superstructure is constituted by political conditions, relations of production, state and class relations. In the last analysis, the throwing-back of relations of production into the superstructure prompts the naturalization of productive forces. This perspective on the transition relegates the relations of production to the political sphere and the problem of these relations is treated in political terms. Indeed, Lenin treats this whole question in terms of simple superstructure which the transformation of certain social relations suffices to suppress. The paradox of Lenin's development is that by the theoretical effacement of the relations of production, and the prevalence granted to productive forces, these very same productive forces are caused to disappear in the analysis of the transition.

In fact, the problem of the revolution becomes not a transformation of economic production and reproduction, but the political upheaval which abolishes the forms of private ownership and allows the passage of monopoly capitalism to a state of socialism defined as that state immediately consecutive to capitalist monopolies. In Lenin's own words, "Socialism is nothing but state-capitalist monopoly which has been turned in the interest of the whole people and has therefore ceased to be capitalist monopoly."[8] Monopoly state capitalism is the most complete material preparation for socialism and it becomes the material base for socialist production once capitalism is rid of its bourgeois superstructure. This theoretical construct, produced by a de-dialecticalization of the concepts, reveals the identification of two phenomena which Marx made a point of differentiating: capitalist socialization and socialist socialization.

A Fatal Blunder

In *Capital*, Marx attempts to show the specific character of the capitalist mode of production. Unlike feudal production which confined social production within the corporation's narrow limits, the capitalist modes of production are shown by Marx to entail the integral socialization of labor. In Book I, in the chapter on co-operation, he characterizes such socialization in these terms: "If then the capitalist mode of production presents itself to us historically, as a necessary condition to the transformation of the labor-process into a social process, so, on the other hand, this social form of the labor process presents itself, as a method employed by capital for the more profitable exploitation of labor, by increasing that labor's productiveness."[9]

7. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 439.
8. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 113.
9. Marx, *Capital* (N.Y.: International Pubs., 1967) Vol. I, p. 335.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In effect, if the development of productive forces under capitalism leads to an effective integration of the productive processes of society, to an increasingly narrower co-ordination of social production, which tends to become a unique process; then, this process of growing interdependence of the different branches of the processes of production is specific to capital, and cannot be confused with socialist socialization which takes place in the framework of different relations of production. In its accomplishment, the socialization of labor takes on forms and adopts different dispositions according to the specific economic structure—capitalist or socialist—which executes it. "In a given society the limit would be reached only when the entire social capital was united in the hands of either a single capitalist or a single capitalist economy."[10] In turn, this socialization constitutes the objective base of capitalist or socialist economic planning, according to the dominant relations of production, capitalist or socialist relations or production.

Capitalist Socialization

Capital reacts to the socialization of productive forces by giving itself structural forms capable of rejecting the contradictions into which it falls. Marx, in *Capital*, explains how this adaptation of capital to the conditions of reproduction on a wider scale succeeds. "Expropriation extends here from the direct producers to the smaller and the medium-sized capitalists themselves. It is the point of departure for the capitalist mode of production; its accomplishment is the goal of this production. In the last instance, it aims at the expropriation of the means of production from all individuals. With the development of social production the means of production cease to be means of private production and products of private production, and can thereafter be only means of production in the hands of associated producers, i.e., the latter's social property..."[11] In this citation, the passage of the means of production from capital to directly social ownership might appear to be achieved by itself. As we will see, however, such is not the case.

Within the capitalist mode of production, this expropriation is presented under a contradictory form. The mastery of the increasingly social means of production is attained by only some of the capitalists whom Marx calls, with a twist of humor, pirates of industry. Indeed, the action of the system, far from constituting the solution of this contradiction, only "elaborates it and develops it by giving it a new aspect." The result of the suppression of capital within the limits of the capitalist mode of production itself is only a formal suppression. Marx does not mean by suppression the end of capital's logic. On the contrary, he shows in the same text that this suppression is an imposed pressure, that, far from abolishing the effects of this logic or even contradicting it, allows dead labor to dominate living labor with more efficiency and in a more implacable fashion. A historical form of capital's

10. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 627.
11. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 439-40.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

manifestation, that of private ownership, is suppressed, but not the relation itself nor the logic it develops. This transitory phase towards a new form of production establishes monopoly in certain spheres, provoking the interference of the state. As Marx noted, it is private production without control by private ownership.

New forms, as for example the co-operative factory, constitute forms of transition from the capitalist to the collectivist mode of production, the point through which, according to Marx's expression, "there necessarily passes the reconversion of capital into the ownership of co-operating producers." Nevertheless, these transitional forms remain forms of capital, and reproduce, in their actual mode of organization in these conditions, the processes of production and the failings of a system of capital: fragmented work, alienation, exploitation, etc. The workers themselves become their own capitalist and use the means of production to give value to their own work. To this degree, and Marx emphasizes it, these forms of production necessitate an upheaval in the conditions of production in order to give birth to a new social order. Moreover, constituted as they are, such forms cannot become the material basis of socialism.

For Lenin, capitalism, insofar as it exploits the resources of planning and programming which characterize the present era, provides the proof that the material conditions for a socialist order exist in its core. Once the bourgeois class (or more exactly, its foundation in the private ownership of the means of production) is suppressed, society becomes an objective, positive framework which proletarian power orients in the direction of socialism. This view presumes that capitalism is only the system of confrontation between proletarians, sellers of labor power, and capitalists, possessors of the means of production and that once the social base of the capitalist class is destroyed, capital itself is abolished.

At this juncture, the concept of capital is central for the theory.[12] Marx, in the *Critique of Political Economy*, insists on this point: "Capital is the economic power that dominates everything in bourgeois society. It must form both the point of departure and the conclusion..."[13] In Volume III of *Capital*, he becomes more precise, adding: "...under the capitalist mode of production...capital...forms its dominant category, its determining production relation..."[14] Consequently, "instead of being a thing, capital is

12. What allows Marx to make the distinction between these two types of socialization is his theoretical analysis of capital, which Lenin forgets, a dialectical analysis which rejects every hypostasis, every reification, by thinking in terms of form, movement, logic. For instance, in the *Grundrisse*, Marx noted the difficulty of defining capital: "The conceptual specification of capital encounters difficulties...capital is essentially capitalist; but at the same time again as an element of his existence distinct from him, or production in general, capital. We shall likewise find later that many things are subsumed under capital which do not seem to belong within it conceptually." *Grundrisse*, trans. M. Nicolaus (New York, 1973), p. 513. There is nothing astonishing here; it is not the mark of theoretical incapacity. On the contrary, it is enough to remember what Hegel said in the preface to the *Phenomenology of Mind* about the inadequacy of definition to the dialectical object in order to understand the theoretical import of the remark from the *Grundrisse*.

13. Marx, *Critique of Political Economy*, trans. S. Syazanskaya (New York, 1970), p. 213.

14. *Op.cit.*, Vol. III, p. 827.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a social relation among persons, which is established by the intermediary of things."[15] The characterization of capital in terms of a relation thus implies its conception as a form. Since form finds its essence in the process of production, it is a social relation, but, above all a relation of production, a complex combination of relationships articulated around the relation of living to dead labor, a dialectical relation with its own logic. This logic totally structures the processes of production in order to extend it progressively to the social totality. Lenin ignores the structural power of capital as a determining relation of production. To be sure, capitalism is not defined by an elementary dichotomy between proletariat and bourgeoisie, covering over the ownership and the non-ownership of the means of production, but rather by a logic which develops at the heart of productive combination and society. The "break" between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is only a result of this relation. This logic is specific to capital, a principle which modulates the whole social structure from top to bottom and which determines all social practices, even beyond the sphere of production. Capitalism must be defined not in relation to its results but as a function of this law which capital imposes and which, in different historical epochs, assumes varying forms.

The capitalist mode of production is characterized by what Marx calls salaried labor, a *salaried relation* inasmuch as it subjugates labor power to the exigencies of the increase of value. The salaried relation appears at the level of the productive processes and adheres to a specific logic, namely, that of value functioning for its own self-increase. This relation and its reproduction imply the reproduction of the determining production as capital. Through the mediation of a certain number of forms determined by the division of labor, this reproduction operates by an entire specific arrangement of the elements of production. The suppression of this complex relation necessitates a subversion and upheaval from top to bottom in the old mode of production.

Engels, in *Anti-Dühring*, boldly attacks Dühring for maintaining that once power is seized within the sphere of production, it remains noticeably the same as before: "And now we see how puerile Herr Dühring's notions are—that society can take possession of all means of production in the aggregate without revolutionizing from top to bottom the old method of production and first putting to an end to the old division of labor...."[16] Engels calls this revolutionary transmutation "the act which liberates the world." Suppressing the old division of labor is the very matrix of the economic transformation of socialist transition. It is by this suppression, and solely by it, that the social appropriation of the means of production and of the productive forces simultaneously is accomplished. To this extent, the revolution is not, as Lenin thought, the immediate realization of a moment of society fixed in the present, but rather is society's "going beyond itself," according to Lukács' phrase.[17]

15. *Ibid.* (Paris), Vol. 3, Book 1, p. 207.
16. Engels, *Anti-Dühring* (Moscow, 1969), pp. 352-353.
17. *Histoire et conscience de classe,* trans. Bois and Axelos (Paris, 1961), p. 97.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The *Communist Manifesto* underscores these differences as follows: "All the preceding classes that got the upper hand, sought to fortify their already acquired status by subjecting society at large to their conditions of appropriation. The proletarians cannot become masters of the productive forces of society, except by abolishing their own previous mode of appropriation, and thereby also every other previous mode of production."[18] Thus, for Marx and Engels, there exists a specificity in the organizational forms of the mode of production's structure under capitalism. This specificity precludes the possibility that capitalism's economic base could be utilized for socialism once the dictatorship of the proletariat is established. Marx wrote of the Commune: "The working class. . .know that in order to work out their own emancipation, and along with it that higher form to which present society is irresistibly tending by its own economical agencies, they will have to pass through long struggles, through a series of historic processes, transforming circumstances and men."[19] What allows the abolition of capital as a determining relation is the creation of a new organization of production founded on association.

Engels, in *Anti-Dühring*,[20] addressing the same issues but in a political context, showed that the proletariat's seizure of state power did not abolish capital nor capitalism as a mode of production. The workers' rise to power only marked the inevitable passage toward the transformation of capitalist relations of production and of the organization of labor. It was the result of a continual structuration and restructuration of productive forces and of a struggle between capitalist and socialist relations of production.

Prior to the coming to power of the proletariat, the dominant class fought for the reproduction and maintenance of capitalist relations of production which grounded its existence as an exploiting class. The proletariat, on the other hand, once in command, is constrained in its position as a dominated class, to work for the suppression and termination of these same relations in order to achieve co-operative relations (*association*). The political struggle must aim at overthrowing the relations of production. Such an overthrow and the advent of socialist society, with the formation a division of labor that progressively withers away, lead to the greater development of productive relations in which the co-operative producers can "develop the principal productive force: Man."

Socialist Socialization

By definition, the period of transition represents the period in which the socialist relations of production transform the productive forces. Since the development of socialism remains impossible with the conditions of capitalist

18. Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New York, 1955), p. 21.
19. Marx, *The Civil War in France* (New York, 1940), pp. 61-62.
20. Thus in the chapter on theoretical notions, he distinguishes two things: the seizure of the means of production—in the name of society by the state—that the capitalist collective can realize (centralization)—and the seizure of the means and forces of production by society, which indicates the suppression of the capitalist division of labor and of capital.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

production, it is only by a specific transformation of productive forces that the truly socialist mode of production can be constituted. The historical necessity of erecting socialism on the base of a capitalist system does not imply, in the least, that this base be utilized as it stands. On the contrary, the base, even down to the technology in use, is modeled according to the imperatives of capital. The combinations of labor power and the means of labor in the processes of production are brought out under the aegis and for the function of capital reproduction; these processes are, at the same time, a material and formal process.

Marx demonstrates that the unity of production itself is reproduced through the reproduction of the processes of labor. Clearly, these processes simultaneously act as processes of production insuring the recapitulation of the social conditions of their own fulfillment and foundation. The enterprises, with the modern technology bequeathed by capitalism, develop economic structures specific to capital. The natural laws of technology of large-scale industry are only a myth inherited from the technological optimism of the nineteenth century (Saint-Simon). Technical laws are social laws, resulting from the domination of capitalist relations of production over productive forces. Similarly, the technical laws of a socialist society must be the outcome of the structure of socialist relations of production restructuring these same productive forces. The mark of capital is inscribed in the economic relations developed at the level of labor relations in the processes of production: by a certain technical division of labor, by the externalization of labor, by the alienation of the workers, by a hierarchical organization of labor, and by the opposition of manual and intellectual work. A true transformation of this laboratory of capital requires the modification of all these elements and the substitution of new relations at the heart of the processes of production. These alterations would allow the producers to affirm themselves as masters of their activity, of production, and of the productive forces they bring into play. This moment of transformation of the production processes leads to a complete upheaval in the social and technical division of labor which, in return, revolutionizes the social and political forms reproducing, on the level of social relations, the conditions for the functioning of capital.

Hence, one can advance the notion that the dominance of socialist relations of production, and the transformation, thanks to this dominance, of the relations of real appropriation (if they depend on intervention by other instances in the economic instance), have as a common presupposition a radical transformation of the labor processes and their articulation. If, in the last analysis, productive forces always play a determining role, to the degree to which they fix the limits wherein new relations of production and appropriation can develop, the relations of production do play a dominant role in this change. One again can take up metaphorically the distinction which Marx outlines concerning the capitalist transition, between formal and real submission to capital, by reversing the relation of the two terms. State ownership and the dictatorship of the proletariat thus would institute the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

phase of formal subjection of capital to labor. The state yields to processes of labor and to pre-existing determined processes of production and reproduction. There is no transformation in the mode of production itself; the labor process unfolds in exactly the same way as before, except that it is now "subordinate to social needs."

In the formal submission of capital to labor, the constraint exercised in order to produce surplus labor only differs in form from that of the previous mode of production, capitalism. Relations of subordination and domination remain identical, with the difference that they are justified now as satisfactions of social needs. The relation between the worker and the State is substituted for that of paid worker and capitalist, but the content of the relationship is identical. The content of the real process of labor and the technology in force do not change. Work is regulated simply and unfolds in a more coherent manner under the eye of the State and its representatives. These elements, however, are in total opposition to the "specifically socialist mode of production." This mode develops, as directly social production increases, by revolutionizing work technology and the mode of real existence of the totality of the social labor process, simultaneously with the relations between the different agents of production. Furthermore, the real submission of capital to labor only can be the result of socialist relations of production intervening in the processes of production and reproduction, which lend these processes a new form founded on the co-operation of the producers.

Economic Transformation or the School of Large-Scale Industry

From the first months of the revolution, Lenin insisted on the importance of the economic question. Already in *State and Revolution*, he underlined the decisive character of the problem in his study, "The Economic Foundations of the Withering Away of the State." This economic change aims at bringing about the suppression of class society and the termination of all exploitation of man by man. In a text of March 1919, "Greetings to the Hungarian Workers,"[21] he declares that the essence of the dictatorship of the proletariat does not consist in violence but in the proletariat's spirit of organization.

Still, what does the economic revolution mean to Lenin; what types of practices does it imply; what new kind of organization will come to found it; what will be the criteria of real radicalism; what are the measures which will insure the de-proletarization of the working class; what new forms of economic relationships between the producers will it establish and how will bourgeois democracy give way to the effective will of the co-operators? In short, what mechanisms will it install in order to suppress the proletariat as a class? Marx put such questions on the agenda of the revolution. Lenin left them aside.

In the first moments of the seizure of power, the principal tasks of the proletariat, for Lenin, are ordered around political questions. The current situation then shifts the order of the questions and the political gives way to

21. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 227.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the economic. In effect, the form of the new political regime, the dictatorship of the proletariat, must be completed naturally by a series of measures on the economic level, leading to democratization and reorganization on new revolutionary bases—process and production—of the economic base of Society: "...we must be able to do practical organizational work. This is the most difficult task, because it is a matter of organizing in a new way...the economic foundations of life...And it is the most gratifying task, because only after it has been fulfilled (in the principal and main outlines) will it be possible to say that Russia has become not only a Soviet, but also a socialist, republic."[22] Lenin, in *State and Revolution*, had opened a polemic against Kautsky which asked that the workers, under the pretext of an increasingly complex modern technology, renounce their function of management and limit themselves to the control of the bureaucratic administration. He advanced the mythical idea that capitalism reduced management functions to such "simple operations of recording, registry and supervision that they are perfectly within the reach of all men provided with a minimum of education," which supposedly authorized a debureaucratization of the apparatus of direction and the adoption of immediate measures "so that all fulfill administrative functions, so that all become bureaucrats for a time, and, therefore nobody may become a bureaucrat."[23] Thus it is a question of going beyond the minimum program of Kautsky, of directly realizing the regulation of production and of "extirpating forever the bureaucratic weed."

For Lenin it is only a question of administration. Capitalism creates the positive framework for the administration of the masses and intervention is limited to spheres of administration and direction, allowing the enterprises to function according to the same methods as before. The idea of an interrogation of the capitalist hierarchy, of the division of labor, of the establishment of self-government by the producers in the workplace and in production, is for Lenin the result of petty bourgeois ideology. To those who talk about "the conditions of work," he replies: "Less chatter about 'industrial democracy'," about "liberty, equality, fraternity...."[24] In the discussion on unions, he expresses his idea in a few lines: "Industry is indispensable, democracy is not. Industrial democracy breeds some utterly false ideas."[25]

What interests Lenin most and what constitutes the central axis of economic transformation in his theory of transition, is the increase in the productivity of labor, the development of productive forces realized by what he calls "a higher order of the social organization of labor compared to capitalism" and not the transformation of labor conditions, which only preoccupies bourgeois ideologues: "In the last analysis, productivity of labor is the most important, the principal thing for the victory of the new social system."[26] This higher kind of social organization of labor is ordered by two

22. *Ibid.*, Vol. 27, pp. 242-43.
23. *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 217.
24. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 497.
25. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 27.
26. *Ibid.*, Vol. 29, p. 427.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

elements, accounting and control, which bring about socialization and develop new relations of production: "The principal difficulty lies in the economic sphere, namely, the introduction of the strictest and universal accounting and control of the production and distribution of goods, raising the productivity of labor and socializing production in practice."[27]

Such socialization, which "realizes" a social structure superior to capitalism, and creates the conditions in which the bourgeoisie can neither exist any longer nor reform itself, is the renewal of the progressive socialization of work due to the development of technology and of productive forces, which concentrates the means of production in capitalism. This socialization, however, is more of a fact in the development of productive forces than of human interaction. Capitalist socialization, "the mechanized and socialized large-scale production of capitalist industry constitutes the material base of socialism."[28] But capitalism develops structural forms which enter into contradiction with this socialized base. Socialization, in practice, has as its goal to suppress this contradiction and to bring about an equivalence between already socialized productive forces and the new relations of production. It is only the reduplication of capitalist socialization, by the adaptation of soviet institutions to the mode of labor of the capitalist system's large-scale mechanized industry. "The possibility of building socialism depends exactly upon our success in combining the Soviet power and the Soviet organization of administration with the up-to-date achievements of capitalism."[29]

If, following Marx and Engels, Lenin clearly distinguishes centralization from socialization,[30] the latter is not envisaged as the transformation of forms of capital, as the suppression of the division of labor, as the realization of a new structure of production ordered around the association of producers, but as the simple recovery of a socialization alredy brought about by capitalism. The economic structure of capitalism remains the base[31] for the construction of the new socialist economic structure, accounting and control accomplishing the passage from capitalist to socialist organization where all citizens are transformed into salaried workers for the State: "Accounting and control—these are the principal things that are necessary for the 'setting up' and correct functioning of the first phase of communist society. All citizens are transformed into the salaried employees of the state...."[32]

Certainly, the battle fought in 1918 between Lenin and the leftist communists, over the type of transformation to promote in economic questions, sheds considerable light on Lenin's conception of the content for

27. *Ibid.*, Vol. 27, p. 241.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 298.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 259.
30. "The difference between socialization and simple confiscation is that confiscation can be carried out by 'determination' alone, without the ability to calculate and distribute properly, whereas socialization cannot be brought about without this ability." *Ibid.*, p. 334.
31. "...large-scale machine industry...is precisely the material source, the productive source, the foundation of socialism..." *Ibid.*, p. 268.
32. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 210.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

this transformation. The leftist communists denounced the politics of the party, on the one hand as a politics in which the working class' economic power had little place, and on the other hand as a politics already revealing, by an accelerated process of bureaucratization, the faults of the system set up to guarantee minimal democratic exercise of power by the revolutionary class.

In "On Left-Wing Communism," Lenin maintained that state capitalism was, from the economic point of view, infinitely superior to the contemporary state of the economy, that it was impossible to "make progress" without going through what state capitalism and socialism have in common, and that "Socialism is inconceivable without large-scale capitalist engineering based on the latest discoveries of modern science. It is inconceivable without planned state organization, which keeps tens of millions of people to the strictest observance of a unified standard in production...,"[33] reaffirming thereby the positive character of capitalist productive forces, which are in no way contradictory to the new mode of production, and which, on the contrary, constitute its objective base. "Only those who are worthy of the name of Communists who understand that it is impossible to create or introduce socialism without learning from the organizers of the trusts. For socialism is not a figment of the imagination, but the assimilation and application by the proletarian vanguard, which has seized power, of what has been created by the trusts."[34] The refashioning of economic organization goes back, in the last analysis, to the superstructure which envelops the organization and the structure of the processes of production (what Lenin recognizes as the positive core of large-scale industry). Consequently, it can attack only the outside of the capitalist reality inherent in the economic process. Administration and accounting, in the same way as worker control,[35] only bring about a permutation of persons—in place of the functionaries of capital from the bourgeois class, there are bureaucrats of the working class.

If Lenin declares the necessity of the practical intervention of the proletariat in production and its organization in order to realize socialism, then denies, at the same time, its whole revolutionary thrust by limiting the work of transformation and of liberation of the working class to mere administration and accounting conceived as the adaptation[36] of the institutions of large-scale industry, with absolute submission during work and the maintenance of a hierarchy inherited from capitalism. The open struggle, by Lenin, for the establishment of new relations of production is exhausted in

33. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 27, p. 339.

34. *Ibid.,* p. 350.

35. Worker control is only the result of control and accounting; it leads to the actual direction of the economy returning fully to the workers, who have learned the administration of large-scale industry at the side of bourgeois specialists and allows the establishment of socialism: the ownership of the means of production and technical knowledge made private, the concrete base of existence of the bourgeoisie and of the perpetuation of capitalist relations of production, the first abolished and the second appropriated by the working class.

36. "Socialism owes its origin to large-scale machine industry. If the masses of the working people in introducing socialism prove incapable of adapting their institutions in the way that large-scale machine industry should work, then there can be no question of introducing socialism." *Ibid.,* p. 212.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the problem of efficiency. It only attacks a superstructure, in moment outside the process of production, not in its internal process, the one in which labor power and the means of labor combine, where surplus value is produced by what Marx called "the alchemy of production."

By denying the specifically capitalist nature of the processes of production, Lenin participates in an economism which confers a sacred character on productive forces. This organization subordination, which Marx denounced as crippling to the worker, parcelling him up in the extreme, is presented as endowed with the same objectivity as technology. Servitude and alienation are anchored in matter and hide behind it. Still, the freeing of the individual's productive forces necessitate the radical upheaval of this alienating matter.

Marx shows, quite clearly, that in the capitalist mode of production the elements of the labor process belong to capital; tools and primary material are its property, the same as the labor power spent in the process. Its authority dominates the entire process and direct producers are subordinate to it. Marx demonstrates, in the same way, that capital's authority is assured by the division and organization of labor in hierarchized forms, by the fragmentation of tasks to an extreme degree and by the generalization of profit. Yet, it is to this technology that Lenin lays claim in the name of a superior mode of labor, in the name of socialism, in the name of the freeing of the individual, in order to develop the productivity of labor by all means. Technology, then, must appear to the worker as the simple result of the technology of science and production.

If the operating technology, however, can appear as an objective element of the productive process, it is, nevertheless, evidence of an intervention in the service of capital. Marx writes: "It is a result of the division of labor in manufactures, that the laborer is brought face to fact with the intellectual potencies of the material process of production, as the property of another, and as a ruling power...modern industry...makes science a productive force distinct from labor and presses it in to the service of capital."[37] What escapes Lenin totally is that there is no model of labor in general, but that every mode of labor is a model of a specific mode of production, and that large-scale industry develops its own particular mode of labor, which responds to the imperatives of capital.

Lenin's theory of the process of transition, supported by an anti-dialectical and mechanistic conceptualization of the relation between productive forces and relations of production, could only lead him to center the economic question around the problem of productivity. Since productive forces are not transformed, and since the emergence of the relations of socialist production depends on their development, the entire revolutionary work must expedite this development. Here acceleration only can be accomplished by the increase in labor productivity. "In every socialist revolution,...there necessarily comes to the forefront the fundamental task of creating a social system superior to capitalism, namely, raising the productivity of labor, and in this connection

37. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 361.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(and for this purpose) securing better organization of labor."[38] "Capitalism can be utterly vanquished, and will be utterly vanquished, by the fact that Socialism creates a new and much higher productivity of labor."[39] Consequently, one can understand why Lenin centers economic questions on the increase in productivity, and how productivity becomes the key to transition, the categorical imperative, the main objective and the principle of all economic transformations.

Lenin could justify himself by certain works of Marx, like *The Poverty of Philosophy*, which would seem, by their determinist cast, to authorize an interpretation whereby the upheaval and change of social relations and productive relations would be imputed mechanically to the transformations and development of the productive forces. Such formulations, however, of Marx are more the effect of polemical exaggerations than of a theoretical decision.

In fact, Marx confirms in a letter to Engels of January 28, 1863 that the degree of development of productive forces does not determine the mode of production. In this letter, he points out that the appearance of the capitalist mode of production does not correspond to a level of productive forces, that a certain level of technique is not enough to establish by itself specific social relations. Instead, the two material bases giving rise to mechanical industry are considerably anterior to the capitalist mode of production: "The rereading of my technical-historical extracts has led me to the opinion that, apart from the discoveries of gunpowder, the compass and printing—those necessary prerequisites of bourgeois development—the two material bases on which the preparations for machine industry were organized within manufacture during the period from the sixteenth to the middle of the eighteenth century (the period in which manufacture was developing from handicraft to actual large-scale industry) were the clock and the mill. . . Both were inherited from the ancients."[40] Hence, one must distinguish between the conditions of possibilities connected to a given development of science and technology, which possesses its own autonomy in relation to society's economic givens, an the conditions of accomplishment of a certain manner of articulating productive forces within the processes of production. The passage from formal to real submission is not the result of a new level of technology, but the product of the reversal of the schema of the tool to that of the machine. The production of relative surplus value determined precisely this reversal, the introduction of machinery was conditioned by the social element.

Paradoxically, Lenin in *State and Revolution* as well as in numerous other texts, reaffirms against all reformists, the necessity for the revolution to destroy the state. Nonetheless, one must be able to distinguish what is said in theory, and what the theory says beneath its explicit discourse, sometimes

38. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 257.
39. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 497.
40. Marx, "Letter to Engels, January 28, 1863," *op.cit.*, p. 142.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

against the theory itself. In effect, the entire problematic of Lenin, centered on the positivity of the productive forces of capitalism and of large-scale industry, engaged in a sort of questioning which in the last analysis prohibited both the theoretical posing and the practical investment of the question of the realtions of production. It is the absence of this interrogation of the nature of the productive relations, and correlatively of productive forces, which produces a reversal of the economic and the political, by which the political sphere becomes the seat of determination of the socialist character and, not simply, of the transition. Given this perspective, Lenin could write concerning the problem of the transition from capitalism to socialism: "The correct solution of this problem can be found only in the concrete study of the specific relations between the specific class which has conquered political power, namely, the proletariat, and the whole non-proletarian mass."[41] Since the economic base constitutes a neutral space, it is state intervention which allows or does not allow the development of worker control, the assignment of a new direction, the imposition of a different rhythm for the developing productive forces and the appearance of new social relations in production. In sum, the socialist character of production and of society is founded not on the economic structure and concrete relations which develop there, but on the character of political power. The determination of this power and, further, the nature of the process of transition is not attributed to the analysis of the relations of production, but to the political form of power (bourgeois or proletarian) and to the interests which it defends. The question is, as was written in "The Impending Catastrophe," "knowing who controls whom, i.e., which class is the controller and which the controlled,"[42] seeing no contradiction in the fact that the proletariat, for its emancipation, is organized into forms that the bourgeoisie used for its exploitation.

The refusal to take into account the fundamental importance of the problem of the relations of production and of the economic power of the working class prevented Lenin from truly comprehending the nature of political power. Marx, for one, explained in the preface to the *Contribution to the Critique of the Political Economy* that political power only can be characterized in the last instance by reference to the economic sphere, "the totality of the relations of production constituting the economic structure of society, the concrete basis." "My inquiry led me to the conclusion that neither legal relations nor political forms could be comprehended...by themselves...but that on the contrary they orginate in the material conditions of life...that the anatomy of...civil society...has to be sought in political economy."[43] Lenin on the other hand, seeks the meaning of the conditions for the existence of civil society in the political forms of the state. This train of theoretical, and then political errors is only the result of what we have tried to bring to light—Lenin's economism, which prevents the distinction between capitalist and socialist socialization.

41. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 44.
42. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 100.
43. Marx, *Critique of Political Economy, op.cit.*, p. 20.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Thus, to conclude, against attempts to explain the reversal and failure of the Bolshevik revolution and, more precisely, Lenin's errors by a strained and critical context, by a pressure which history supposedly exercised on the march of the revolution (including a capitalist encirclement, a limited proletariat facing an important peasantry, the failures of the German and Hungarian revolutions, the need for socialism in one country), and against a metaphysical explanation which reduces the causes to an external facticity, we have attempted to show:

—that Lenin's errors must be grasped within his total problematic, a problematic encumbered from the start by an economism whose roots one can find in the Second International, and particularly in those thinkers, like Kautsky and Plekanov, whom Lenin brings forward in support.

—that, in the last analysis, Lenin's theoretical errors are the result of a theory of historical development conceived in terms of an opposition between the forces of production and the forms of production, in which the two aspects are undifferentiated in a quantitative notion of development, patterned by a determinism by which the natural necessity of productive forces produces relations of production.

—that, contrary to metaphysical explanations, the failure of the world revolution does not explain these mistakes, but makes intelligible the fact that they have not been corrected, in the sense that the launching of this revolution would have allowed those deviations of Lenin's theory to be erased under the criticism of a new revolutionary impetus.

BACK ISSUES STILL AVAILABLE!

PARTIAL CONTENTS OF TELOS 25

GIAN ENRICO RUSCONI: *Marxism in West Germany*
WOLFGANG MUELLER, CHRISTEL NEUSUESS: *The Illusion of State Socialism*
JUERGEN HABERMAS: *Reply to Müller and Neusüss*
CLAUS OFFE: *Comments on Müller and Neusüss*
ISTVAN MESZAROS: *Phases of Sartre's Development*
CHRISTIAN LENHARDT: *Anamnestic Solidarity*
SANDOR RADNOTI: *Bloch and Lukacs*

PARTIAL CONTENTS OF TELOS 26

ALVIN GOULDNER: *Prologue to a Theory of Revolutionary Intellectuals*
KARL KORSCH: *Ten Theses on Marxism (1950)*
PAUL BREINES: *Karl Korsch's 'Road to Marx'*
PAUL MATTICK: *Anti-Bolshevist Communism in Germany*
DOUGLAS KELLNER: *Korsch's Revolutionary Historicism*
LEONARDO CEPPA: *Korsch's Marxism*
OSKAR NEGT: *The Problem of Constitution in Korsch*
GIACOMO MARRAMAO: *Crisis and Constitution*
FURIO CERUTTI: *Hegel, Lukacs and Korsch*
GIACOMO MARRAMAO: *Korsch in Italy*

Cost to individuals, $2.50 each; to institutions, $3.00. Foreign orders please add 10%. Order from:

TELOS
Sociology Department
Washington University
St. Louis, Missouri 63130 USA.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Social Relations of the Classroom: A Moral and Political Perspective

by Jean Bethke Elshtain

Much of the continuing debate over radical teaching focuses on issues of pedagogical method or "technique." Non-traditional teachers ask themselves: Is it possible to break down "artificial" and destructive relationships of dominance and submission within my classroom? Can I assist students in an effort to cast off passive modes they have internalized as a result of years of socialization into deference towards authority? Shall I attempt to reorder dynamics in my classroom in order to undo the damage done to students within hierarchically structured classes? Can I engender and sustain a sense of "community" within my classroom? These imperatives are felt by all radical teachers but most particularly by those who identify themselves as feminists; indeed, "hierarchical," so-called "traditional, male-dominant" classrooms are frequently castigated as constituent features of a repudiated male approach to teaching and learning, a mode linked to blustering and authoritarian displays of power.

In the discussion which follows I position myself against the popular trend as I mount an attack on pop-psych pedagogy and what I term the "therapeutic classroom." I shall argue that a concentration upon teaching strategy, method, and technique, however well meant, is based, first, on implicitly demeaning assumptions about students; second, on certain empiricist and mechanistic models of mind which lie within the heart of classical liberal thought; and, finally, on an instrumentalistic and therefore reductionistic understanding of the meaning of human thought and action.

The psycho-educational strategy which emerges from these interrelated assumptions is, in the long run, self-defeating for the radical teacher who sees his or her task as the articulation and defense of a critical theoretical perspective. Instead, pop-psych pedagogy encourages a solipsistic and substanceless "deep subjectivity"[1] and a strained and phoney warmth which some, in moments of bland delusion, call "community." The vision of human liberation which emerges from the therapeutic classroom is not so much social or political as it is individualistic and antisocial although it appears in the guise of the former.

I begin with the assertions of those radical teachers who have defended the deployment of a variety of strategems and techniques which are designed to

1. Roger Poole, *Towards Deep Subjectivity* (New York: Harper Torchbook, 1972), pp. 116, 131. Cf. Theodore Roszak, *The Making of the Counter Culture* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1969), p. 97.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reinstill in students some sense of "self" which the "system" has "invalidated" and to create, within their classrooms, a "positive atmosphere." First, the proponents of this approach see their strategy as therapy for students who are, by definition within their model, distressed and for teachers, who are likely to be.[2] The guiding presumption appears to be a vision of contemporary reality which falls just this side of the apocalyptic: if the dreadful hasn't already happened it probably will this semester. The university is depicted as a hideous place which is "not usually a fit place for anyone to be," an "...ecological-disaster area."[3] The hours spent within this destructive, disaster-riddled environment are pleasureful neither for them nor for anybody else. One prototypical articulation of the classroom-as-group-therapy position draws techniques from elementary school experimental teaching methods as well as therapy. This makes sense, of course, as a particular mode of psychological theory and practice serves as one wellspring of the model. For the strategy which evolves from this theory to be effective, the teacher is urged to face certain tough "facts." The first tough fact is that "students are experiencing distress (boredom, painful feelings, numbness, general misery) much of the time;" moreover, this distress, somewhat like arsenic poisoning, is "accumulated...and brought into each new class setting. Students are preoccupied with what is going on in their personal lives, or simply numb and deadened, worn down by a lot of bad experiences from their pasts, both in and out of schools."[4]

The portrayal of students as distressed, lost, numb, depressed, isolated, helpless, dominated by feelings of worthlessness, inferiority, anxiety, and invalidation, propelled by incompletely expressed and painful "unfinished emotional business" which makes them appear "stupid, tense, rigid, and repetitive"[5] is the depiction of a state of near-catatonia which would seem to make of these hapless and distorted half-persons fit candidates for roles in Marat-Sade rather than participants in a classroom. My analogy is not overdrawn. The classroom "strategy" which flows from this bleak portraiture of subjects who are not so much *alienated* as *anomic*[6] is a therapeutic technique designed to "change the psychological climate of the classroom to allow for personal growth, pleasure, and the learning of what is usually called

2. Shierry M. Weber and Bernard J. Somers, "Humanistic Education at the College Level: A New Strategy and Some Techniques," Copyright Nov. 20, 1973. Cf. Bruce Rappaport, "On Radical Teaching. Part Two. Marxist Teaching Practice," *Bulletin of the Union of Marxist Social Scientists* (April, 1974), *passim*.

3. Weber and Somers, p. 1.

4. Weber and Somers, p. 3.

5. *Ibid.* Cf. Rappaport, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

6. Steven Lukes, "Alienation and Anomie," in William E. Connolly and Glen Gordon, *Social Structure and Political Theory* (Lexington, Mass: D.C. Heath and Co., 1974, pp. 191-211). Lukes argues that the concepts of alienation and anomie are both constituent features of theories of human nature and social life—they are judgments made with reference to some standard. Durkheim, who was "...haunted by the idea of man and society in disintegration," stressed the harmonic, the need to belong. The disharmonic leads to a state of anomie.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

content..."[7] The task which has top priority is finishing all emotional business so that something called "natural" learning can occur. The teacher makes room for all the emotional business to be completed by eschewing both the "authoritarian scholar-lecturer" model in which the teacher "knows the subject matter thoroughly and sets up rules for the classroom and for evaluation based on her own standards" (a mode said to make students "feel stupid" and to increase their "level of pain"), together with the "let chaos reign" approach. The preferred mode is one which calls for the teacher who "radiates self-confidence and pleasure in the exercises to be done..." to implement a set of strategems. According to two of its celebrants, this alternative classroom model involves the repudiation of an "authoritarian" insistence upon rules through the replacement of such rules with techniques. One central feature of the technique is an announcement by the teacher of the specific terms of "what will be expected."[8]

The distinction between "setting up rules" and deploying techniques coupled with "expectations" may seem precious or trivial; in fact, it is quite important as it serves to lay bare the presumptions imbedded implicitly within the two approaches. In the first model ("authoritarian scholar-lecturer") one finds an image of what is presumed to be a *coercive* classroom—although there is nothing in the description *per se* which precludes *persuasion* rather than coercion as the predominant pedagogical "method" within the traditional classroom. If it is possible to avoid coercion within the traditional approach, *manipulation* is unavoidable within the pop-psych model. Through a series of strategems or games the teacher helps students to get to the place she wants them to be—hence the emphasis on "skillful management" and "good vibes." The unstated assumption, of course, is that student preferences, were they known, would be found to mesh with those of the teacher-therapist who knows best.

Manipulation as "good vibes" and non-threatening warmth slides all too easily into an overtly coercive model: everyone *has* to participate. Unfortunately, radical teachers who have written on the subject have failed to tackle this issue head-on. One radical instructor, for example, declares that the techniques he espouses as part of a "Marxist teaching method" are likely to run into "resistance and cynicism from the students..." No matter. Such resistance can and should be ignored as its source is simply the residue of all the "bad experiences students have had in other classrooms. Despite student resistance, even "snickers and embarrassment," the pop-psych teacher-therapist forges forth undauntedly until she too not only *enjoys* the exercises but *insists* upon them. Why the insistence? There is no point, after all, "in

7. Weber and Somers, pp. 2, 4. At this point in the article the authors deploy a little psych-ed strategy on the reader—presumably a teacher—who may be so devastated by their numbing prose describing benumbed students that she is likely to have fallen into a 'blue funk.' No need, adjure the authors, for they know she has 'tried' to do her best to be interesting, relevant, and encouraging. A little balm (called positive reinforcement) for the perturbed spirit! Cf. Rapaport, *op.cit.*, p. 7.

8. Weber and Somers, pp. 6-7.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pretending that we do not have *power* in the classroom."[9] [emphasis mine].

To accept this weak defense of the teacher's power is to countenance the use of power as manipulation—surely a more insidious, because disguised and dishonest, exercise of power than old-fashioned, open coercion. Power which comes masked in the mandate to "feel good" cannot be confronted directly by the student. Coercion, however, can: the student is being bullied and she knows who is doing it. Within a manipulatory framework the student, not unlike a patient in an asylum, does the "exercises" for her own good not because she necessarily sees a point to them but because the teacher has the power to "insist" upon them.

What are some of the techniques utilized to create a "positive atmosphere" and to "counteract distress?" One suggestion, designed to help students establish ties with one another so that they will "feel good" is the "cocktail mix," a period during which students are asked to write conversational topics on tags which they then pin on their shirts and blouses. Tagged students wander the classroom, seek out someone with an interesting tag, and talk for ten minutes. Then it's time to make new tags in order to "facilitate" fresh conversations. A second tactic is "news and goods" which should occur at the beginning of each class period.[10] "News and goods" consists of sharing something "nice" with the class. The teacher should participate by sharing some piece of her personal life (a work of art, perhaps, or a song). This creates "good feelings" which further buttress classroom "community."

Advocates of the therapeutic classroom favor an intense and insistent breaking-up of the class into small groups which, in turn, break and re-form at regular intervals. A "typical" two-hour class on Hegel's *Phenomenology* (students are encouraged to refer to Hegel as "Georg"), as it is depicted in one formulation, calls for some *eight* separate class segments—most of them running five to ten minutes (including a ten minute intercession). "News and goods" leads off followed by talking to the "person next to you." A fifteen minute lecture on "basic Hegelian concepts" ensues. Following this dose of instant "Georg" students are given five to ten minutes for questions whereupon they break into small groups for a twenty-minute "Hegel rap." These small groups, in turn, intermingle and merge with others for an additional fifteen minutes. During the final class segment each student is asked to "share" insights garnered during the two-hour flow chart. (By this

9. Rappaport, *op. cit.*, p. 8. On the distinctions between coercion, manipulation and persuasion see William E. Connolly, *The Terms of Political Discourse* (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath and Co., 1974), Chapter 3, "Power and Responsibility," pp. 85-138. In a manipulative as opposed to a coercive situation it is "harder to grasp the role played by the manipulator" (p. 98). Coercion is moraly preferable to manipulation. Although there is a moral presumption against *both* coercion and manipulation, in the case of coercion the coerced individual knows who to hold responsible.

10. What happens to "news and goods," say, on the day that the morning newspapers headline Kissinger's expressed desire to use B-52 bombers against Cambodia in retaliation for the seizure of the Mayaguez? Should "news and goods" be quashed by "bad things" that happen outside the classroom? To focus on these "bad things" would most certainly create some pain and distress.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

time the Owl of Minerva, with battered wings, has undoubtedly gone to roost.)

The purpose of such small group activity is, according to its afficionadoes, to counteract the prevailing presumption that intellectual work "is often accompanied by the feeling of doing lonely, isolated, hard labor."[11] Finally, the teacher-therapist counsels students on what to do with all those "bad feelings that come up while studying."[12] Yelling and screaming appear to be the preferred methods—with the provise that one shouldn't disturb or "freak-out" others and thus increase their pain. It seems doubtful that "bad feelings. . . while studying" will arise too often, however, as neither papers nor examinations are graded and students are asked to set their own goals and to do their own evaluations. Because the teacher must turn in a grade, a *contract* system is institutionalized which enables "anyone to get an A who chooses to do the necessary *quantity* of work."[13] The stress is clearly on form or externality with little or no reference to content. The "trappings," not the "substance" of intellectual work is stressed.

The only point at which content seeps into the pop-psych strategy is contained in the imperative that the content of what is being taught must "seem" relevant *right away*, if it doesn't relate to immediate social or personal issues, we say, then it is *really useless* and we are exploiting the students by teaching it."[14] This is a position not unlike one attacked by Gramsci as implicitly reactionary when he lamented the burgeoning of vocational schools ("those designed to satisfy immediately produced interests") and the demise of the traditional, formative, or classical school. The thrust towards practicality, with its concomitant penchant for the immediately useable, was only "apparently" democratic; in fact, Gramsci concluded, "it is destined not merely to preserve social differences but to crystallize them in Chinese complexities."[15]

---

11. Weber and Somers, p. 15. The lonely, isolated hard labor of Marx at work on *Das Kapital* or Freud during his period of painful self-analysis which formed the basis of *Die Traumdeutung* perhaps? It is difficult to imagine Marx coming in with "news and goods" as a way to break the ice before he began to explore the social relations of capitalist oppression and exploitation. Both Marx and Freud saw their tasks, difficult and painful ones, as the creation of ways of looking at the world which were at odds with the dominant reality. The stress on "no pain" is reminiscent of B.F. Skinner's goal of a behavioralist-technologistic utopia—the creation of a world of "automatic goodness" in which no one knows frustration nor pain. See B.F. Skinner, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1971), p. 66.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
14. Weber and Somers, p. 4. Cf. James Glass, "Epicurus and the Modern Culture of Withdrawal: The Therapy of Survival," *American Politics Quarterly* Vol. 2 No. 3, July, 1974, pp. 313-340). For the Epicurean, philosophy served a direct therapeutic purpose. "There is no profit in philosophy. . . if it does not expel the suffering of the mind" (p. 320).
15. Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and trans. by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971), p. 40. Glass, in the piece cited above, writes: "The culture of withdrawal places great importance on reconstructing interpersonal communication. . . These concerns give to it a close affinity with psycho-therapeutic assumptions found in the humanist or 'third force' school of social psychology. . . hardly the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Those pedagogical techniques I have sketched are defended by many radical teachers as comprising *in themselves* a critique of capitalist domination and ideology. Yet these are the very methods regularly deployed in "progressive" elementary and secondary schools (hardly bastions of critical thought) in the clear recognition that the techniques alone criticize nothing! Indeed, as a "softer" approach to instruction, such techniques serve as a more deceptive and opaque and thus effective support of the prevailing order. To assess whether or not the articulation and defense of a critical consciousness is being mounted in a classroom, an evaluation of substance is necessary. Students may sit in circles, wander the classroom, rap, wear tags, share "news and goods," even hold hands and sing songs and never come close to critical theory. The task of critical theory is not and cannot be an easy, painless one. It is an effort which requires time and hard work.[16] If the teacher-therapist's over-arching goal is to help students to "feel good," not only will these students be manipulated as stimulus-response organisms governed by an overweening utilitarian calculus to maximize pleasure and to avoid pain, but coherent thinking about self and others will go by the board.

It is both bizarre and unfortunate that radical teachers, particularly those self-identified as Marxist and Marxist-Feminist whose thinking begins with a structural analysis, should fall for the lure of the therapeutic classroom. Neither students nor classrooms exist in some precious isolation abstracted from the totality within which they are lodged; neither can be severed from that reality through strategems, maneuvers, and "good vibes." Indeed, much of the explanatory force of Marx's thought lay in his insistence that no set of social relationships could repose in splendid isolation apart from the whole. The proponents of the therapeutic classroom are perpetuating the pipe-dream that a classroom is, or can be molded into, a community. As Jacoby puts it: "The endless talk about human relations and responses is Utopian; it assumes what is obsolete or yet to be realized: *human* relations... To forget this is to indulge in the ideology of sensitivity groups that work to de-sensitize by cutting off human relationships from the social roots that have made them brutal."[17]

---

creators of Marxian structures of perception. The emphasis lies on interpersonal transactions, on seeing the radical question as one of the discovery of 'self' in a situation unattached to conventional processes of socialization. To be with others in these arguments, is to be a 'person,' to find an 'authentic encounter,' to know a 'peak-experience,' has absolutely nothing to do with resisting unjust political regimes or organization political struggle..." (p. 319).

16. See Russell Jacoby, *Social Amnesia* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975), particularly the chapters on "Revisionism: The Repression of a Theory" and "The Politics of Subjectivity," *passim*. Cf. Glass, "Epicurus and the Modern Culture of Withdrawal" who notes that for Marx "the revolutionary task entailed the commitment to a radical social consciousness; it is in the space of 'species-being,' prepared by praxis, that radical self-awareness becomes possible" (p. 315). Marx's remarks on "instant revolution" are directly applicable to the quest for "instant community:" "Easy come, easy go." From Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, ed. Lewis S. Feuer (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1959), "Excerpts from *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*," pp. 318-348, p. 323.

17. Jacoby, *Social Amnesia*, p. 105.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The pop-psych method, with its fetishization of form and its evisceration of content, conduces towards and legitimates a profoundly anti-intellectual and crude instrumentalism (pedagogy as an Hobbesian "reckoning consequences"). Indeed, the therapeutic classroom shares with capitalism a stress, not on the quality or content of the "goods" it produces, but on quantity and gross aggregates. Just as plastic models of GI-Joe and dialysis machines for persons with terminal kidney disease are all on a par as measured by the Gross National Product, student efforts in the pop-psych classroom, those which are careless and thoughtless together with those which are thoughtful and coherent, are flattened out and reduced to a single level. Capitalism ignores social goods and teacher-therapists repudiate critical judgment. This no doubt makes life simpler but it also infuses it with a monotonous, trivial, and ultimately demeaning imperative for it vitiates important distinctions. I concur with the insistence that "the only intelligence worth defending is critical dialectical, skeptical, desimplifying."[18] That kind of intelligence does not emerge from fun and games.

It is perhaps best to begin with posing several straight-forward and apparently simple hypotheticals in order to unravel further the murky mystifications of the therapeutic classroom. Assume a "traditional" teacher-scholar who gives (more or less) formal lectures with provision for discussion. The teacher stands in the front. The students sit lined up in rows. This teacher requires tests and written essays and even grades them with the criteria for what she considers coherent, rigorous intellectual work set forth as clearly as possible well in advance. If one were to pose the question as to whether or not the creation of critical consciousness could emerge within this traditional "form" the answer must, of course, be "yes." Gramsci, for example, as a staunch defender of the classical curriculum and traditional pedagogy, maintained that leading a mass of people to think coherently and some coherent fashion, about the real present world, is a 'philosophic' event far more important and 'original' than the discussion by some philosophical 'genius' of a truth which remains the property of small groups of intellectuals."[19] Now teaching coherent philosophy demanded sustained and focused effort, something Gramsci recognized clearly and defended consistently. The determination of the critical thrust of a course must be posed and answered with reference to content, not form.

Now assume for a moment the therapeutic teacher who is a disciple of "non-authoritarian" teaching methods. She institutes the full panoply of pop-psych techniques to "facilitate" classroom interaction, trust, warmth, a sense of community and "good vibes" in order that students might, painlessly, absorb "content." She comes a class participant herself, not as a teacher, but as a "resource person" or "facilitator." If one were to consider the possibility

18. Susan Sontag, "Notes on Art, Sex, and Politics," *New York Times*, February 8, 1976, Section D, p. 36.

19. Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*, p. 325.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that a simple-minded, non-critical, anti-intellectualism might emerge from all that warmth and facilitation, the answer must be that there is nothing in the technique *per se* to preclude this outcome. It may even be likely for students within the therapeutic classroom, rather than confronting a difficult body of material directly, are paraded instead down the primrose path through fun and games. If the teacher were to challenge them, to make demands, to evaluate and to criticize, she would produce "pain and anxiety." Because she views students as helpless victims, an unhappy anomic grouping tossed about willy-nilly in their quest for painlessness, she obviously does her job best when she keeps them comfortable, creates surcease, and encourages learning only if it comes disguised as "fun."

I should now like to turn to the implicit philosophical and ideological presumptions, beyond or below that "bad subjectivity" Jacoby terms "not the negation of bourgeois society but its substance"[20] which infuse the pop-psych classroom. First, the mechanistic model of the human mind adopted implicitly if not explicitly by pop-psych pedagogues (many of whom are steeped in behavioralist techniques) is part and parcel of a theory of human thought and action which is reductionistic and distorted. Human beings, within classical mechanistic psychology, are repositories of innate drives and tensions which propel them to pursue pleasure, to avoid pain, and to mistrust, if not seek actively to control their fellows.[21] All mental dispositions follow in a simple one-to-one liaison from these physiological givens.

A mechanistic theory of mind is one of the complex dimensions of classical liberal-utilitarianism which features a hapless individual, prey to the twin forces of pleasure and pain, which are, on this view, simple unitary concepts —free-floating ideological abstractions which make no necessary reference to social relations.[22] It follows, in turn, that all moral concepts are reducible to mindless and rationally indefensible "opinion" or "feeling." Thus classical utilitarians, like Bentham, lose that human subject who is a self-reflective agent, who as the object of oppressive and exploitative social forms may be damaged, demeaned, and destroyed. Within liberal utilitarianism the fate of this human subject is inessential. What matters is that the quantity or yield of agregate pleasure should be greater than the yield of unpleasure or pain. Utilitarianism "attaches value ultimately to states of affairs..."[23]

---

20. Jacoby, *Social Amnesia*, p. 103.

21. James M. Glass, "Schizophrenia and Perception: A Critique of the Liberal Theory of Externality," *Inquiry* (V. 15, 1972, pp. 114-145), p. 116. Pop-psych pedagogy's view of students is not unlike the Hobbesian characterization of the state of nature. In the words of Glass, Hobbes' state of nature depicts "a condition of disorganization and dissociation, anxiety imparts to life its reality, fear creates a perverse interpersonal nexus, and men dwell within a 'nasty' and 'brutish' existence."

22. The view critiqued above is not shared by Freud although certain terms ("pleasure," "unpleasure") also figure within psychoanalytic theory. Freud's dialectical theory of mind, including the relationship between reason and passion, the "inner" and the "outer," is directly at odds with the presumptions of utilitarianism.

23. J.J.C. Smart and Brnard Williams, *Utilitarianism for and against* (Cambridge: University

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

That teachers, including radical teachers, should turn to this handy yardstick as a criterion of success or failure is further proof of the reification and objectification of human thought and praxis within an individualistic, capitalist society. Utilitarian instrumentalism, in theory and practice, constitutes such a "great simple-mindedness" that it can neither criticize nor condemn manipulative practices if these practices lead toward an outwardly expressed (and "behavioralistically" observable) satisfaction.[24] The theory cannot account for the fact that students may appear to be "happy" on some crude external calculus but that such "happiness" tells us little or nothing about their intrapsychic reality nor what their lives ought to be. For if one equates outward expressions of satisfaction with reality *simpliciter* the problem of false consciousness melts away. The liberal-utilitarian and behavioralist must take people at their word or make judgments based on some standard of what constitutes action in accord with happiness. The Marxist and the Freudian could take these external expressions and manifestations as indicative of false consciousness. Thus the "feel good" formulation can be and has been deployed to justify and to legitimate paternalistic and manipulative social practices and processes in schools, families, prisons, mental hospitals and work-life.

That the advocates of pop-psych pedagogy belong, conceptually, in the same camp as liberal-utilitarians is clear. They, too, stress "immediate relevancy" and results. The "real" on this view is not the rational but the "felt." The engineered search for warmth in the classroom, infused with a regressive fantasy of placid, instant community, effortless intimacy, and irresponsible ties to others, this totalizing exultation of the immediate, exemplifies a surrender in the form of imitation of that which we do not have within any genuinely oppressive and repressive social order, namely, intimacy, friendship, and responsibility wihtin a situated human community.

Finally, why should the therapeutic classroom prove to be a particularly seductive lure to feminists? (A discussion of classroom "methods" and "techniques" emerged with boring alacrity for years at nearly every conference billed "feminist.") Ironically, it is within the therapeutic classroom that female students, as Jacoby points out in his critique of "bad subjectivity," can simply do what presumably "comes naturally," namely, eschew leadership and authority, revel in the immediate, radiate an oozy warmth and good-will which is not to be confused with critical gentleness, and repudiate all rules and leaders. The slogan "to get in touch with one's

---

Press, 1973). See especially Williams', "A critique of utilitarianism," which appears on pp. 77-150, from which the above quote is drawn (p. 95).

24. Williams, *Utilitarianism*, p. 149. Utilitarian simple-mindedness, according to Williams, "consists in having too few thoughts and feelings to match the world as it really is." Cf. Williams' interview with Bryan Magee in Magee, ed. *Modern British Philosophy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1971, pp. 150-165) in which he argues that the predominant notions of utilitarianism are currently "in a state of great conceptual confusion...people have the feeling that something shallow is being passed off as something deeper..." (p. 160).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

feelings" is, as Jacoby points out, "...to affirm an individual existence already suspect... That parts of the women's movement made subjectivity programmatic, repudiating all objective theoretical thought, indicates only the extent to which the revolt recapitulates the oppression: women allegedly incapable of thought and systematic thinking but superior in sentiments and feelings repeated this in their very rebellion..."[25] Pop-psych pedagogy legitimates further a rejection of systematic thinking even as it encourages a celebration of the female student-as-victim and this further buttresses the infantization of women.[26] Enveloped within the bosom of the therapeutic classroom the female student can speak with the "authentic" voice of her "life experience."

There is a trap. If life experience, unmediated through a critical conceptual medium, is given a privileged epistemological status, and the "feelings" which attach to this experience are embraced without challenge or criticism, the analysis or conclusions which emerge will be riddled with the fatal flaws of a false, because uncritical, consciousness. If it is indeed true that women are oppressed it follows, as Juliet Mitchell has pointed out insistently,[27] that this oppression must have psychic consequences. Women have internalized relations of dominance and submission—this is one of the potent "injuries" of class, sex, and race oppression. Thus to privilege "female experience" is to absolutize a distorted relativity, to ground oneself in the flux of repression, and to avoid the need to evaluate competing theoretical frameworks on the basis of their explanatory force—which comes closest to grasping coherently a complex totality which incorporates the human subject-object at its critical core.

The "life experiences" of students must and should be taken seriously as one dimension within the creation of radical and critical consciousness. But this experience must be mediated through conceptual categories if it is to support, to sustain, and to provide the prelude for critical theory.[28] There is no such thing as pure, unmediated receptivity: one comes to grasp the particulars of one's life within the prevailing epistemology, in this instance an ahistoric but

25. Jacoby, *Social Amnesia*, p. 106.

26. This not only leads to political utopianism tied to a simple reversal of roles within a male-dominant order, it negates moral agency or responsibility which demands that one not merely "behave" unthinkingly but be able to give reasons of a certain kind to explain and to interpret one's actions. If one abandons this distinction, the difference between people and machines is obliterated and one is left with a bland and mindless venting of spleen. Cf. Stuart Hampshire, *Thought and Action* (New York: Viking Press, 1959), p. 185. The self-reflexivity of which I speak is also the goal of Freudian therapy.

27. See her *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974) and a shorter and more accessible essay "On Freud and the Distinction Between the Sexes" in Jean Strouse, ed. *Women and Analysis* (New York: Grossman Publishers, 1974, pp. 27-56).

28. It is often, quite disastrously, the case that oppressed groups have been seduced into believing that because they have been (or are) relatively powerless, they have somehow remained pure and untainted by the social order. Two essays which debunk this notion are Jean Bethke Elshtain, "Moral Woman and Immoral Man: The Public-Private Split and its Political Ramifications," *Politics and Society*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (1974), pp. 453-474, and Abigail L. Rosenthal, "Feminism without Contradictions," *Monist*, Vol. 57, No. 1 (January, 1973), pp. 28-42.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

relativistic instrumentalism which cannot recognize a dialectical logic which refuses to bifurcate reason and passion, the mental and the material, the "felt" and the "known."

The question that arises here is: if the pop-psych classroom is as mindless and potentially destructive as the critique asserts, what does that leave us? Teaching-as-usual? Without moving to create a "positive model" with all the reactionary pitfalls that implies, I shall, however, delineate what I take to be the "critical classroom" with specific reference to teaching critical feminism. First, the feminist teacher who would defend rather than obliterate the critical mind must affirm the necessity for theory as the fundamental, irreducible grounding of any praxis of social liberation.[29] The critical feminist teacher rejects both manipulation and coercion as pedagogical modes—these are the methods of conceptual baby-hood before we all grew up and became capable of forming intentions and purposes. Instead, a dialectical persuasion is pursued. Let me explain for, at first glance, the distinctions between coercion, manipulation, and persuasion may seem sematic niceties or self-justificatory labels which conjure forth division and distinction where none exists. The distinction turns on a presumption that the student is not a victim on the verge of a crack-up by an adult capable of cracking through the self-contained world of bourgeois mystification. Persuasion gives "another reason to inform his choice. Neither the capacity for choice nor ability to act on that choice is impaired by persuasion."[30] Persuasion is the only pedagogical mode consistent with the articulation of radical, critical consciousness.

Because the teacher of critical feminist theory often faces the task of overcoming resistance to the enterprise of theory itself and opposition to any criticism of writings called "feminist," she may find herself categorized as "traditional," "authoritarian" or "male-identified." Nevertheless, the insistence that student and teacher alike must fight all tendencies to flatten out important distinctions and to eliminate the imperatives for political and moral choice must never be allowed to succumb.[31] One of the first distinctions to draw is that between arbitrary force or power, between the capricious and careless manipulation of others, and between that authority

29. See Jacoby, *Social Amnesia*, on the repression of theory and the articulation of negative psychoanalysis and Marxism. I am not here advocating a collapse of theory and praxis such that praxis is to be viewed as some simple outgrowth of theory. I am insisting that without a critical theory one is incapable of deciphering bad praxis bound to the alternatives of present reality from that which seeks to break the boundaries of the present.

30. Connolly, *Terms of Political Discourse*, p. 94.

31. Cf. the Susan Sontag-Adrienne Rich exchange, "Feminism and Fascism: An Exchange," *New York Review of Books*, March 20, 1975, pp. 31-32, in which Sontag dissociates herself from "that wing of feminism that promotes the rancid and dangerous antithesis between mind ('intellectual exercise') and emotion ('felt reality')." This "banal disparagement of the normative virtues of the intellect," she notes, is "one of the roots of fascism. . ." (p. 32). It is also a central dimension of that bland optimism Freud so heartily despised as characteristic of Western civilization.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which may devolve upon both teachers students who work through complex bodies of material and who enter the classroom to criticize not to calm. There is, after all, nothing "radical" about distinction-erosion which makes students feel temporarily "happy" but does not assist them in the understanding and defense of a perspective critical of the prevailing order.

To those students who wish to "like" or to "agree with" every feminist analysis (because the writer's heart if not her head is in the right place, presumably) the answer can only be that there are feminists as well as non-feminists who trade in simple-minded incoherence, the projection of destructive fantasies into political visions, who urge upon others a vague moral protest which demands as the price of a hollow solidarity the sacrifice of critical acuity. This surrender to unreason is never radical: it is now, as in the past, a seductive call to reaction whether this is its intent or not.

To move towards a critical stance, a way of looking at the world which can serve as the foundation of subsequent analysis and criticism, certain basic questions on the levels of ontology and epistemology must be posed. Such questions force students to confront their implicit and unexamined assumptions which are, almost invariably, grounded on some variant of positivism. (This holds true even for those who call themselves Marxists.) Thus we confront how it is we can grasp particulars and incorporate them within higher levels of conceptual complexity; what is the relationship between the knower and that which is known (are we implicated in or apart from knowledge? Do we absorb experience passively, as non-reactive spectators, or do we shape the material given to our sense actively?); what can we say about the nature of that "being," the human subject-object, who lies as the center of critical inquiry?

As previously held, unreflective positions are opened to scrutiny and to debate, students move in a manner not unlike that abstract and conceptual dialectic of the Platonic dialogues, from "received opinions" and conventional wisdom to a re-thinking and re-situating of concepts within a critical framework.[32] The gradual attainment of critical knowledge is neither a passive nor a pleasant experience. Indeed, the first step, as one moves to subject unreflective assumptions to critical scrutiny may well be, not certainty and self-assurance, but perplexity, confusion, anxiety and doubt. But this step cannot be bypassed nor short-circuited if the student is to break through a blur of inchoate beliefs and unorganized thought. Turmoil, self-doubt and self-criticism are inescapable, essential components of the process.[33] Through

32. See G.W.F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, trans. J.B. Baillie (New York: Harper Torchbook, 1967), especially Section A on "Consciousness," pp. 147-214. Cf. Charles Taylor's *Hegel* (Cambridge: University Press, 1975), the discussion of the *Phenomenology* in Part II, particularly the chapters on "The Dialectic of Consciousness" and "Self-consciousness."

33. See a fascinating two-part article by Bennett Simon, "Models of Mind and Mental Illness in Ancient Greece, II. The Platonic Model," Parts I and II, *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* (V. VIII No. 4, Oct. 1972, pp. 398-404, and V. IX No. 1, Jan. 1973, pp. 3-17).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

conflict, questioning, and "trying out" ideas, the knowledge a student gains will truly be her own: she will neither have absorbed it passively nor been tricked or cajoled into it. If the feminist teacher repudiates the demands of this process, she legitimates implicitly that very system which seeks to rob each and everyone of us of our capacities for criticism, debate, and re-conceptualization.[34]

The present "moment" is one which presents both perils and possibilities for the critical feminist teacher. The possibility is that critical consciousness will grow as the young, male and female, face the contradictions between proclaimed and experienced realities within their own lives. This can serve as the leak in the dike through which critical consciousness may finally burst into demands for social reconstruction. But the peril is there too, namely, that the student's recognition of contradiction, in the absence of a widespread and abiding commitment, even among radical teachers, to the articulation of critical consciousness, will simply lead to *ressentiment*, to feelings of impotence and rage and thus to the short-cut of donning one or more ready-made ideological "masks" as one's response to contradiction.[35] (On the balance this seems the more likely if pessimistic outcome given the forces arrayed against critical thought and praxis.)

The adoption of "masks," to borrow Rosenthal's vivid phrase, seems to be a particularly acute peril for students who call themselves "feminists." They are confronted, on the one hand, with the ready-made "mask" of the self-sufficient, self-made male with his rights, his prerogatives, and his power. The other "apparent" alternative is the celebration of the sensitive, intuitive, spontaneous, warm and kind woman (lesbian or straight, it doesn't matter as both may wear the "mask" of fetishized subjectivity) and the projection of a political future which will be an outgrowth of the "female principle" and within which that principle will reign supreme. If the former "face" or "mask" predominates, that of the assertive male-doer, women will simply take their places within the established system of stratification in increasing numbers. If the latter mode prevails, Jacoby's critique of "bad subjectivity" once more becomes apt for such fantasies of a femininity untouched civilization issue "into the very prison that is the bourgeois world" as well,[36] an irrational and

34. The student who completes a course in critical feminist theory should understand and be able to criticize and to defend various feminist positions from the inside-out. Because no easy recourse to "the facts" can ever prove or disprove a social theory, she must articulate the connections between assumptions, conceptual categories, appropriate 'tests' of the theory as well as its normative implications. Facts move within theories and may be assimilated within a number of competing explanatory frameworks. For a lucid articulation of these connections see William E. Connolly, "Toward Theoretical Self-Consciousness," *Polity* (V. VI No. 1, Fall, 1973, pp. 5-35). Gramsci, too, insisted upon the centrality of language as the medium through which conceptions of "the world and of culture" are conveyed. Those with limited facility with language, including a dialect "which is fossilised and anachronistic in relation to the major currents of thought which dominate world history" will possess a limited and provincial grasp of the totality, of the world. See Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*, p. 325.

35. Rosenthal, "Feminism Without Contradictions," *passim*. That Rosenthal refuses to exempt a particular type of narrow Marxism which wipes out or consigns to the wings the conscious human subject is important for the "mask" of a particular type of Marxism, as it is the "mask" of revolt, is often the most difficult to critique and to repudiate.

36. Jacoby, *Social Amnesia*, p. 117.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ultimately banal pastiche of unreflective ordinariness and precious warmheartedness.

Teachers and students in critical feminist theory are, for now, engaged first and foremost in critique—in a negation, a refusal not only to be what one has been before, but a refusal to capitulate to simple-mindedness whether or not it comes with a feminist label attached. A critical consciousness which accepts the burdens of intentionality must reject all the easy dodges open to women to be "inept" and "non-abstract" and recognize them for what they are: features of the social construction of female reality. Finally, a critical feminism must insist that all the easy chatter about liberation is a vapor, a groundless metaphor, unless it forms part of a theory of human liberation, a social rather than exclusively women's liberation. For if the female individual can indeed "liberate" herself apart from changes in the social structure she will not emerge as the new woman but as a character familiar to us all: the old man.

Creating and clarifying a critical feminist theory will go forward, not within the cloying maneuvering of the therapeutic classroom, but among those teachers and students who go about what Wittgenstein called the "often downright nasty task" of thinking honestly rather than soaking up "good vibes." To me that means defending a critical feminist theory within which conceptual re-vision, transformative political praxis, and respect for the complexity and responsibility of persons, form an irreducible whole which is neither identical to nor abstracted from but, rather, immanent within the situated reality which is my life and consciousness.

CRITIQUE
A JOURNAL OF SOVIET STUDIES AND SOCIALIST THEORY
CRITIQUE, 31 Cleveden Road, Glasgow G12 0PH, Scotland

Editor: Hillel Ticktin

Advisory Editorial Board: Ernest Mandel, Mihailo Markovic, Pierre Naville, Peter Sedgwick

Annual Subscriptions (2 Issues): Inland £1.20
Overseas $4.00 (Back Issues $2.50)

Contents of No. 4 includes:
M. Holubenko: The Soviet Working Class Opposition
J-L. Dallemagne: Justice for Bukharin
G. A. E. Smith: The Political Economy of The Reforms
D.-H. Ruben: Materialism and Professor Colletti
M. Brinton: Factory Committees in 1918—A Reply

Contents of Nos. 5, 6, 7 will include:
M. Cox: The Politics of the Dissenting Intellectual
B. Koski: The Situation of Women in Poland
Adam Buick: The Myth of the Transitional Society
Left Communist Theses of 1918
A.Z.: Hungary — the Myth of the Reforms
Gorev: Russian Literature and the Jews—A Translation
R.B.: Anti-Semitism and the Soviet Union
G. Kay: On the Falling Rate of Profit
S. Meikle: The State and the Transitional Period
D. Filtzer: Preobrazhensky's Theory of Consciousness in the Transitional Period
Igniatovic: Culture in Yugoslavia
H. H. Ticktin: Soviet Society and Prof. Bettelheim

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Logic of Marx's Capital

by Richard Winfield

> "It is impossible completely to understand Marx's *Capital*, and especially its first chapter, without having thoroughly studied and understood the *whole* of Hegel's *Logic*. Consequently, half a century later none of the Marxists understood Marx!!"

Introduction

So lamented Lenin in 1914, as world war began to quicken the ground for socialist unpheaval. He had turned to Hegel, annotated the *Science of Logic* and given this private exclamation to its revelation of *Capital*. Unfortunately, the nature of the new understanding was never made clear, and the only time Lenin tried to show how the *Logic* could make Marx's work more intelligible, he merely compared the commodity with Hegel's "Being."

Nonetheless, Lenin's aphorism is still valid today, because neither Marx nor his commentators provide a systematic clarification of *Capital's* methodology. Marxist discussion has accepted the authority of its classics without even being able to ground the discourse of *Capital*. One looks in vain for a remedy to legitimate the work's starting point, to critically establish the adequacy of the argument, or to at last provide the guidelines for not only *completing* Marx's *unfinished* thematization of capital, but also determining the rest of social reality.

What compounds the problem is that throughout *Capital's* unfolding, an amalgam of historical example and general commentary interweaves with the strictly "scientific" argument. Although Marx occasionally warns his reader that a certain topic can receive its *systematic* treatment only at some later point, he presents most material without explicitly discriminating between necessary and merely supplementary discussion. No standard is provided to distinguish rigorous determination from congenial reflection and secure the passage from one element of the discouse to the next. Furthermore, Marx's frequent empirical examples can easily mislead one into considering his concepts as generalizations related to the same given object. This, however, only reduces Marx's conceptual system to the usual theoretical *model*, isolating his categories so that contradictions arise between various sections.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The famous debate on the value-price transformation is a result of this confusion, to cite only one example.

Thus, to understand Marx's later writings, the well-worn claims of *dialectical* science must be elaborated. It must be shown *how* dialectical determination is immanently related to the conceptualization of capital, and *how Capital* actually does proceed dialectically. It is here that Hegel's *Logic* enters to elucidate the dialectical method, and reveal how the constitution of capital's realm is part of its specific philosophical project. For despite all the hue and cry over the specificity of the Marxist dialectic (Althusser's clamour included), Hegel's *Logic* does not stand over and against Marx's *Capital*, but *is* indeed its inseparable *logos*. This truth bares itself in the basic thrust of each work.

To begin with, Marx's thematization of capital is a *social determination* of production. The *Grundrisse* and *Capital* complete the critique of political economy originally outlined by Hegel in his discussion of the "System of Needs" in the *Philosophy of Right*, where "need" and "labor" are rescued from all reduction to an anthropological metabolism between Man and Nature or to a monological technical process. Production is instead developed as the intersubjective process of *capital's* self-constitution into that social sphere of interacting bourgeois. In this manner *Capital* accounts for production wholly through the social process of Interaction. The concept of capital is thereby a conception of modern bourgeois society precisely because only with the capitalist epoch does economic life emerge as an independent sphere of social reality, freed of all natural character just as it is freed of all subordination to the household or to feudal political designations.

Of course, Marx came to this position only in his mature systematic writings. In the *1844 Manuscripts* he had characterized labor in terms of the monological reflective categories of objectification (*Entäusserung*) and alienation (*Entfremdung*). In the *German Ideology* he retained the assumptions of classical political economy, first discussing production as a natural metabolism, and then conceiving Civil Society (*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*) as a given, supra-historical condition of man's existence. Further, in *Wage-Labor and Capital* (1848), Marx formally distinguished forces of production from relations of production, thus implicitly reducing production to a technical process external to its social organization.[1] Not until he began the specific program of the *Grundrisse* and *Capital* could Marx discard these inadequate notions and articulate an intersubjective reality whose moments have the particular autonomy realized by the self-seeking bourgeois. Only when he became able to determine this social individuation of Interaction could Marx actually thematize capital. At that point the argument of the *Grundrisse* and *Capital* was able to emerge in its characteristic *self-developing immanence*, eschewing all reference to an

1. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38: Philosophical Notebooks (Moscow, 1963), p. 180.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

external reflective standpoint for securing its advance, and thus eschewing all attempt at model-building or ideal-typical construction.

It is Hegel's *Logic* which provides the framework for such *social*, that is, *dialectical* determination. Unlike all previous inquiry, the *Logic* departs from indeterminacy to establish Intersubjectivity as the totality of determination.

Hegel realizes that Science must be presuppositionless, that all determination involves mediation, and that discourse must begin with the indeterminate immediate, Being. Yet, he is aware that such an absolute beginning is possible only if freed of the presupposition of a knowing self. For this reason, the *Logic* actually begins from the accomplished *supersession* of the standpoint of consciousness, and, therefore, of epistemology as such. The *Phenomenology of Mind*, is the "deduction of the concept of Science" because it observes the whole of experience overcoming the characteristic distinction of conscious knowing, that of in-itselfness and for-itselfness. Thereby knowing is no longer an instrument that comes to its object as to something ready-made apart from thought. Instead, determinateness is freed from the problematic limitation of a presupposed reflection. What results is nothing but the presuppositionless beginning of absolute indeterminacy with which the *Logic* must begin.[2]

On this basis the *Logic* proceeds from the thoroughgoing refutation of the primordiality of self-consciousness.[3] Unlike the major figures of German Idealism, Hegel is aware that Kant's transcendental apperception, Fichte's absolute synthesis of the *Ich* and the *Nicht-Ich*, and Schelling's Subject-Object identity of intellectual intuition, not only presuppose categorical determinations, but demand grounding in an *intersubjective*, implicitly *social* process.[4] Hegel recognizes that the ego is fundamentally a unity of universality and singularity, whose autonomy *is* only in and through its individuation over and against others. The identity of the ego comprises itself not merely by unifying immediately given determinations so as to inform them as objects of knowledge. The ego is what it is by being a structure of self-consciousness common to every subject, yet individual and excluding all others.[5] For this reason the ego is determinate only in its unity and difference

2. For a discussion of this systematic relation of the *Phenomenology* and the beginning of the *Logic*, see Kenley Dove, "Hegel's 'Deduction of the Concept of Science'," *Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, Vol. 23.

3. Thus, the Hegelian Dialectic moves by rejecting the Frankfurt School's empty subjective Negative Dialectic of external reflection. Again, the *Phenomenology* accomplishes the job better than Adorno, Horkheimer *et al.*, by characterizing them as that shape of consciousness described under the heading: "the law of the heart, and the frenzy of self-conceit."

4. For this reason, Bloch's and Lukács' characterization of Hegel as a philosopher of the Subject-Object Identity is false. See Bloch, *Subjekt-Objekt* (Frankfurt am Main, 1962); and Lukács, *Der junge Hegel* (Neuwied and Berlin, 1967).

5. "But the *I* is, *first*, this pure self-related unity, and it is not immediately but only as making abstraction from all determinateness and content and withdrawing into the freedom of unrestricted equality with itself. As such it is *universality*; . . . . Secondly, the *I* as self-related negativity is no less immediately *individuality* or is *absolutely determined*, opposing itself to all that is other and excluding it—*individual personality*." Hegel, *Science of Logic*, trans. A.V. Miller (New York, 1969), p. 583. This point has been developed by Dieter Henrich in *Hegel im Kontext* (Frankfurt, 1971), p. 97, and by Jürgen Habermas in *Theory and Practice*, (Boston, 1973), pp. 145-146.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to a plurality of egos, whose own identity is a function of their dual relation to others.

As a result, consciousness cannot stand as the irrevocable and irreducible vantagepoint of discourse. Its process of reflection is constituted in intersubjectivity, whose elementary form is reciprocal recognition. In this basic interaction self-consciousness has its actuality. Here, as Hegel writes, "Each is the mediating term to the other, through which each mediates and unites itself with itself; and each is to itself and to the other an immediate self-existing reality, which at the same time, exists thus for itself only through this mediation. They recognize themselves as mutually recognizing one another.[6]

This grounding of conscious knowing in Interaction indicates the possibility of social determination, and with it, the possibility of a sphere of capital realizing the individuality of the bourgeois. What has yet to be shown, however, is that intersubjectivity is the real forum of all determination. Although the *Phenomenology* frees discourse from the standpoint of consciousness, it provides only the most negative characterization of what supersedes it.

What provides the positive statement is the *Logic*. It shows how determination achieves totality by bringing the form of intersubjectivity to such concreteness that no categorial specification falls outside of it. From the Logic of Being to that of Essence and finally to that of the Concept, there is an immanent succession where interrelations of a plurality come to comprise a more and more self-informed and inclusive sphere of determinacy. Thus, in the specification emerging out of Being, Hegel shows how *something* has its proper character only in relation to other correlatively determinate entities. This identity of being-within-self (*Ansichsein*) and being-for-other (*Sein-für-Anderes*) has its corresponding development in the Logic of Essence with the identity of *inner* (*Innerlichkeit*) and *outer* (*Ausserlichkeit*), where generally positedness and its positing are each what they are only through one another. At the threshold of the Concept, dialogical relationship acquires further determinateness in the identity of universality and singularity, where being-in-and-for-itself (the pure form of the ego's self-relation) *is* in so far as it *is* positedness, as an individuality contrasted with others. Finally, in the Idea reciprocity achieves its absolute, unconditioned concreteness in the mutual adequation of the Concept and Reality.[7]

6. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, (New York, 1967), p. 231. It must be noted that this description of the concept of recognition is not itself part of the argument of the *Phenomenology*, which considers reciprocal recognition not as it is *per se*, but only as it appears *for consciousness*. Thus, within the shape of consciousness of Master and Slave the problem is described in these terms: "This pure conception of recognition, of duplication of self-consciousness within its unity, we must now consider in the way its process appears for self-consciousness." *Ibid.*, p. 231.

7. "That something also has *within it* the same character that it is *in itself*, and, conversely, that what it is as being-for-other it also is in itself—this is the identity of being-in-itself and being-for-other,.... This identity is already formally given in the sphere of determinate being, but more expressly in the consideration of *essence* and of the relation of *inner* and *outer*, and most precisely in the consideration of the Idea as the unity of the Notion and *actuality*." Hegel, *Science of Logic*, p. 120. "Because being that is in and for itself is immediately a *positedness*, the Notion

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

By becoming this totality of determination out of the presuppositionless starting point of indeterminacy, Hegel's *Logic* establishes intersubjectivity (*Geist*) as the real foundation and arena of discourse. Here social determination positively replaces the monological standpoint of consciousness. This result is crucial both for the *Logic*'s method and its relation to the *Realphilosophie* to which *Capital* belongs.

Since the *Logic*'s intersubjective process has eliminated all external reflection in constituting determination, form and content no longer fall asunder, but are so united that the very articulation of a specification is its own proof. Thus, the method of the *Logic* is not independently given, but must be constituted as a reiteration of the *Logic*'s entire path of determination *qua* the self-development of the whole.[8]

In fact, the final determination of the *Logic*, the "Absolute Method," is precisely this complete retrospective unfolding, and not just the process of double negation which many identify with the dialectical method. This retrospection begins with a recollection of Being as "*in itself* the *concrete totality*, though that totality is not yet posited,"[9] as thus containing an implicit contrast which does unfold through double negation. However, once a new content arises out of this operation of double negation, the new determination has been proven,[10] so that, as Hegel writes, "the *content*...now belongs to the method. The method itself by means of this moment expands itself into a system,"[11] where the Method's knowledge of the necessity of the advance is at each moment the entire system of determinations in the *Logic* confronting one of its phases.

If Hegel's *Logic* is to serve as the general foundation of *Capital* and as the methodological guide to the particular stages of Marx's argument, it is necessary to look for a correspondence with the full development of determination in the *Logic*. The entire project of the *Logic* is subverted if particular categories are individually extracted and formally applied to Marx's work. Unfortunately, this is precisely what Hans-Jürgen Krahl and Helmut Reichelt do when they take Hegel's determinations of Essence and Appearance out of their proper context, and relate them to different levels of discussion in *Capital*.[12]

Hegel's *Logic* cannot be reduced to an externally introduced tool for investigating *Capital*. In order to maintain the *Logic*'s intersubjective

---

in its simple self-relation is an absolute *determinateness*...thus the Notion is the *individual*." *Ibid.*, p. 582.

8. In *Hegel im Kontext*, Dieter Henrich develops this point (pp. 102-103) only to contradict it, by discussing the thematization of double negation in a particular set of determinations of the Logic of Essence as an *externally* applicable *metalogic* for the *Logic* as a whole.

9. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, p. 829.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 838.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 838.

12. See "Zur Wesenslogik der Marxschen Warenanalyse" in Hans-Jürgen Krahl, *Konstitution und Klassenkampf*, (Frankfurt, 1971), and Helmut Reichelt, *Zur logischen Struktur des Kapitalbegriffs bei Karl Marx*, (Frankfurt, 1970.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

supersession of all egological determining, the relation between its process and that of Marx's concept of capital must be far more immanent.

In point of fact, what follows from the *Logic*'s result is precisely the required internal connection between the two sciences. The *Logic* can inform *Capital* without interfering with either of their independent self-developments because the totality with which the logical Idea consummates must be *particular* in order to be what it is.[13] Just as every determination has been shown to have an implicitly intersubjective structure, so too the entire *Logic* cannot remain alone in its universality, but must achieve its own identity as an individuality, that is, in its being-for-other. For this reason, Hegel's logical Idea necessarily develops immediately out of itself as a realm of Nature, and then, more concretely, as a self-informing world of intersubjectivity where Interaction (*objektiver Geist*) emerges to consummate itself in History.

On the basis of these further determinations, it is possible to maintain Hegel's claim that the *Logic* presents the Concept as such, and that the determinate concepts of the *Realphilosophie* are immanently related to it as specific forms of the logical oneness which must develop from itself as a totality.[14] Thus, the *Logic* is not a surrogate which permits *Capital*'s particular subject matter to unfold. The Determinate Science progresses in its own freedom, just as the logical form of dialectical reason is independent of its interactional embodiments.[15] Nevertheless, the pure articulation of a particular science such as that of capital will reveal the determinateness of what Hegel calls the *Logic*'s realm of shadows.[16] If the specification of the "Absolute Method" is definitive, then the systematic nature of any part of the Science will correspond with the full development of the *Logic*.

Thus, the following discussion attempts to demonstrate how the rigorous argument of the first section of *Capital* (and the corresponding passages within the *Grundrisse*) avoids the dilemmas of egological knowing and instead fulfills the promise of social determination. It should become apparent that Marx's concept of capital develops in the successive forms of the logical Idea without ever presupposing an independent knowing self to describe and order the determinations. For the content of Marx's discourse will turn out to be a *process* of specification in which the object of investigation comes about in the self-development that produces its realized determination. Thereby Marx overcomes the dogmatic idealism of his earlier work, where conscious reflection held sway instead of dialectical intersubjectivity.

As Hegel writes, "Quantity. . . is a stage if the Idea: and as such it must have its due, first as a logical category, and then in the world of objects, natural as

13. See Henrich, *Hegel im Kontext*, pp. 164-165.

14. ". . . a Notion is first, in its own self, *the* Notion, and this is only one and is the substantial foundation; secondly, *a* Notion is *determinate* and it is this determinateness in it which appears as content: but the determinateness of the Notion is a specific form of this substantial oneness, a moment of the form as totality, *of that same Notion* which is the foundation of the specific Notion." Hegel, *Science of Logic*, p. 39.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 586.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 58.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

well as spiritual."[17] The very beginning of *Capital* seizes this pure determination within the intersubjective realm of Civil Society's System of Needs,[18] proceeds to embody its process of specification up through the positing of Money, and then continues to develop in the shadow of Measure towards Capital itself.

The Logic of Commodity

Pure quantity is "being, where the mode or character is no longer taken as one with the being itself, but explicitly put as...indifferent."[19] This is the category with which *Capital* begins.

In its immediate determination commodity is an object of need and of will. As such, its qualitative material existence is something superseded in this its relation to need and will. As an object of specific utility the commodity is comparable to other things with similar utility, and as an object of a certain will, the commodity is likewise comparable to all other objects that exist for that will. Similarly, the specific need and specific will to which the commodity is related are respectively comparable to need in general and will in general. Commodity's quantitative determination as an object of need is use-value, and as an object of will, value.[20]

The determinations use-value and value are continuous magnitudes for they specify simple undifferentiated sameness for commodities at this stage.[21] At the same time, however, use-value and value are both discrete magnitude, since they specify the *single* commodity in its continuity with all others of like determination.

Just as "quantity contains the two moments of continuity and discreteness"[22] together, so the commodity's material existence immediately limits its dual universal specifications, posing it as a quantum of use-value and a quantum of value.[23] Commodity now has a determinate being that makes clear the distinction between its continuity and discreteness by *distinguishing* its sameness. Use-value and value here exist as a something, as *this* commodity. However, as such, these universals do not have simply one determinate being.

They rather exist as a plurality of such commodities. Each something of use-value and value is only a determinate quantity through its continuity and opposition to other similarly specified commodities. Therefore the limit on the commodity's discrete magnitude of use-value and value is not its simple

17. Hegel, *The Logic* from *The Eyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (London, 1968), p. 187.
18. See paragraphs 189-208 of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*.
19. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 8 *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften* (Frankfurt, 1970), paragraph 99, p. 209.
20. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 7: *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (Frankfurt, 1970), pp. 135-136.
21. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 5, p. 212.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 228.
23. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 7, p. 137.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

unity as an isolated object, but instead is constituted in its specific relation to others.

The *movement of quantum to number* is here embodied, as commodities are placed in relation to each other in the structure of simple exchange. In this meeting of need and need and will and will, the commodity sustains itself as an object having magnitude of value through its relation to another commodity. The commodities are both alienated and appropriated by two contracting wills who face each other as owner of the commodity desired by the other. Rendered socially equal thanks to the natural diversity of their particular needs, these two subjects recognize each other as free property owners. "What...remains identical throughout as the property implicit in the contract is distinct from the external things whose owners alter when the exchange is made."[24] This "universal in which the subjects of contract participate"[25] is exchange value, and it is through its agency that the moments of the number determination concretize themselves.

The limit of number is not the abstract determinateness that it was with the simple quantum. In number this limit is posited as a manifold within the quantum itself, enclosing the specific aggregate of the other discrete magnitude to which it is related. The continuity of this *amount* is the *unit*, the form in which the quantum relates back to the opposing discrete magnitude which provides it with its limit. These two moments of number, *amount* and *unit*, are respectively embodied in the simple exchange of two commodities as the equivalent and relative forms of value.

The determinate being of use-value and value has led to the exchange of some commodity A for some other commodity B. In their participation in the universal of exchange-value, A and B distinguish themselves just as number has come to consist in its two aspects. The exchange of A for B is first manifest as the alienation of A as a value and the appropriation of B as a particular use-value. Here A presents itself as the relative form, and B as the equivalent form of value. A expresses its value in B, whose bodily form has become its equivalent. B is *immediately* presented as a quantity of A, for B's material existence as a particular use-value has become the independent embodiment of the value-form of A. As Marx writes, B's own value "acquires no quantitative expression"[26] since the underlying identity of exchange value has rendered B's value at one with its use-value. The contrast of use-value and value has been made evident for A, however, because its value has manifested itself in the material existence of *another* commodity, B. The value of commodity A has here obtained "independent and definite expression,"[27] entirely apart from A's existence as a use-value.

This expression of the commodity A's value is a number that has as the

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 159-160.
25. *Ibid.*, paragraph 77, p. 160.
26. *Marx-Engels Werke* (MEW), Vol. 23: *Das Kapital—Erster Band* (Berlin, 1972), p. 70.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

aggregate magnitude within it (as the manifold of its limit) the equivalent value form that B embodies. B's material existence as particular use-value is here the *amount* in this statement of number. This equivalent form *finds its continuity* in the relative value form of A, which so to speak encloses this *amount* in itself. B is "an amount of one and the same *unit*,"[28] and this *unit* of the number determination is commodity A in its relative form of value. Here "the limit is an external one...the amount to be aggregated, is contingent, arbitrary."[29] This "accidental and purely relative"[30] nature of the exchange allows B to be any commodity whatever, and the exchange relation as a whole can only be brought about by the external act of the two contracting subjects.

However, this purely accidental character is overcome, because quantum as number actually "has *within itself* the externality, the relation to other."[31] In the self-relation of number to its amount, this moment collapses itself into the unit, and the limit of the quantum is posited as unitary and identical with the quantum itself. "Number as a one, being posited as self-reflection reflected into itself, excludes from itself the indifference and externaltiy of the amount and is self-relation *as relation through itself to an externality.*"[32]

This movement arises in simple accidental commodity exchange for the reason that what is the alienation of commodity A as a value and the appropriation of commodity B as use-value is at the same time the appropriation of commodity A as use-value and the alienation of commodity B as a value. The result is exactly the reverse of the preceding: commodity A now figures as the amount, and commodity B as the unit in this number determination of value. Commodity B appears in the relative form as a mere use-value, while commodity A shows itself in the equivalent form as an exchange value whose use-value and value remain undifferentiated in independent form.

In either case, it is the commodity whose value is being expressed which "figures directly as a mere use-value, while the commodity in which that value is to be expressed figures directly as a mere exchange value."[33]

As a whole, then, this embodiment of the number determination presents each commodity as *both* an amount and a unit, as *both* the pure use-value and independently embodied value that together comprise the relative value form, and the pure exchange value that is the equivalent form of value. Here amount and unit have immediately passed into one another, and the individual commodity has shown itself to be determined as quantum of use-value and value by being external to both these specifications as a pure exchange value. The commodity has excluded the externality of its opposition to other commodities, for now its appearance as a magnitude of use-value and value has nothing to do with the particular determinateness of the other

28. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 5, p. 251.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 235.
30. MEW, Vol. 23, p. 51.
31. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 5, p. 251.
32. *Ibid.*, pp. 252-253.
33. MEW, Vol. 23, p. 76.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

commodity exchanged with it. The completely accidental nature of the value relation has been superceded. The individual commodity has its relation to others reflected into itself, and no longer is this rapport determined by the chance meeting of the commodity with a *particular* other one. The limit of the commodity's value expression no longer rests upon a relation to a specific commodity B. The determination of the commodity has now been posited as an infinite series of exchange relations with all other commodities distinct from itself.

This transition to the expanded form of value is a movement from the determinateness of number to that of degree. From being in itself multiple, the limit in the quantum has passed over to become "in itself *simple* determinateness."[34] This "*independent* indifferent limit is absolute *externality*,"[35] for the self-relation of the quantum is at the same time interrelated to its determinateness as outside itself. Degree is related "through itself to its other"[36] in a continuous uninterrupted progress of self-external determinateness.

Degree manifests itself as that exchange relation where the individual commodity (let us call it A) expresses its value in the equivalent form of all other commodities. The value of A is "placed in contrast under all possible shapes with the bodily form of"[37] A, and all other commodities appear as "particular equivalents differing in kind."[38] The magnitude of A's value is an independent limit, indifferent to the determinate existence of each of the particular commodities opposing it. Its external expression is an absolute gathering of countless pure exchange values that altogether comprise an infinite expanse of "fragmentary equivalent forms, each excluding the others."[39] No contingent meeting of contracting subjects is called for to sustain the value relation. The continuous series of self-external determinateness is something that proceeds through commodity A itself. The expanded form of value posits the individual commodity as indifferent to its particular equivalent forms in their isolation, yet self-related in the continuity of their continual overcoming as fragmentary value forms.

As such, this degree determinateness is actually an immediate union of the quantitative aspect of absolute externality with the qualitative character of independence.[40] The degree is in the amounts that it has excluded "as its *own* amount,"[41] for it has revealed itself to be a "unity which is self-related through the *negation of its differences*."[42] In the expanded form of value, the determinate being of A's value is a limit which *becomes* in the continuous overcoming of the particular equivalent values related to it.[43]

This repulsion of determinateness from itself is the degree actually

34. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 8, p. 216.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 218.
36. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 5, p. 253.
37. MEW, Vol. 23, p. 80.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 78.
39. *Ibid.*
40. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 8, p. 228.
41. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 5, p. 254.
42. *Ibid.*, pp. 254-255.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 259.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

producing its otherness by impelling itself beyond itself.[44] Therefore, in this progression "quantity returns to itself,"[45] and shows itself to have "its determinateness in another quantum by means of its non-being, of infinity."[46] This self-determinateness is no longer beyond and outside the quantum, for the quantum now finds itself in other quanta as the quantitative infinity. These other quanta have their determinateness in it, and their determinateness as such gives this universal quantum its quality as the element and unity of the specification of all others.

In this manner the pure determination of the expanded form of value passes over to the general form. The individual commodity A is a universal equivalent in which all other commodities differentiate their value from their particular use-value. As their values are all expressed in this same commodity, A sustains its own infinite self-relatedness by finding itself as the substance in which every single commodity shows its individual value determination. This universal equivalent is the element and unity of all value forms by its very independent being. Although any commodity can be the equivalent of the general form of value, whatever commodity *is* determined as such immediately repels all other commodities from assuming its role, just as all other commodities exclude it from appearing in the relative form of value. The qualitative character of the particular universal equivalent is inseparable from its proper role as the medium in which all other commodities are rendered commensurate exchange values. Therefore the universal equivalent becomes limited to a specific commodity, and the general form of value has made its transition to money.

When the independence and indifference of quantitative infinity have finally combined, the qualitative quantum, measure,[47] has emerged. This immediate unity of quality and quantity is a specific quantum with a specific quality belonging to it. Therefore its magnitude constitutes its specific nature. As Hegel writes, "an alteration of the magnitude would alter the quality of the something."[48] At the same time, however, the measure is also a quantum with "an indifferent limit which can be exceeded without altering the quality."[49] The qualitative quantum has this immediate distinction of being on the one hand an intrinsically determinate magnitude, and on the other, an overcoming of the indifference of its external alterations in other quantum.[50]

Specifying measure is that determination in which these two moments are explicitly expressed.

---

44. *Ibid.*, p. 260.
45. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 8, paragraph 110, p. 228.
46. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 5, p. 278.
47. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 8, paragraph 107, p. 224.
48. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 5, p. 395.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 398.
50. *Ibid.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This is first the qualitative quantum that has come to be a standard by which other quanta are determined as amounts of its unit. It is the rule by which other somethings are measured according to this external comparison, where the intrinsically determinate magnitude of the specifying measure remains an arbitrary amount.

This rule is given spiritual embodiment in money which stands opposed to the world of commodities as *measure of value* and *standard of price.*[51] Commodities quit their bodily shape and present their exchange value in an imaginary amount of money which fixes their value as a particular price. Individual commodities can no longer directly confront each other as use-values or exchange values. Their price determinations make their exchangeability dependent upon the external comparison to money.

At the same time, however, this specification of price actually negates this one-sided contrast of money and commodity. In its determination as price, the individual commodity comes to embody the universal equivalent, and the money appears itself in this particular form. The individual commodity here emerges as the essential, comparing itself to the money equivalent. Yet since money *is* price in-itself, the universal form of the entire world of exchange-value, all individual commodities are equally *its* particular substances.[52]

What is manifest is that in the price determination of exchange value, money and the commodity, each exist in and through the other, and their difference is merely formal.[53] Money has shown itself to be intrinsically related to the individual commodity that it measures. In its determinate being as standard of price and measure of value, money *is* for itself the measure that the opposing commodity has given itself in price.

The determinateness of money has passed from that of the rule to that specifying measure which is not an external standard, but as qualitative quantum that is related to its own self in the specific quantum that it has measured.[54] Here, rather than the qualitative moment being determined on the side of the intrinsically determinate magnitude, it is now related to the alterable, external aspect of the amount belonging to the opposing quantum. The measure is no longer a bare quantum whose determinate being can change without upsetting its rule.

This assimilating determinateness is realized in Money's emergence as the medium of circulation. In the structure of commodity—money—commodity exchange, money comes to be a *specific* relation of exchangeability as the middle term of two commodities. Through the mediation of *this* amount of money, these two commodities are inextricably bound together. Money has assimilated the individual commodity that was its externally imposed

51. MEW, Vol. 23, p. 113.
52. Marx, *Grundrisse,* trans. Martin Nicolaus (London, 1973), p. 229.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 301.
54. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 5, p. 399.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

amount, and specified itself in this otherness by relating this commodity to another through the agency of *this* money's specific magnitude.

The immediate determinateness of this process has two moments: the exchange of the first commodity (C_1) with the money, C_1-M, and the exchange of this money with the second commodity (C_2), M-C_2. Although both commodities "are. . . qualitatively related. . . each is on its own account a qualitative determinate being."[55] Just as the pure determinateness of measure has become "the *immanent* quantitative relationship of *two* qualities to each other,"[56] so these two commodities express their determination both as particular substances assimilated in money's self-determination and as determinate beings in their *individual* relation with the money.

Each of the two metamorphoses distinguishes itself in a dual way.

First, in both C_1-M and M-C_2, the commodities C_1 and C_2 each realize their price in M, which appears as the identical equivalent form of the two exchange values. In this way M allows each commodity to realize its price by posing its own exchange value in that of the other.[57]

Secondly, C_1-M and M-C_2 distinguish themselves *from* each other. In the first metamorphosis, it is the substance of the exchange value, C_1, that leaves the circulation to be consumed. On the other hand, when M is exchanged for C_2, "exchange value disappears,"[58] since it is the money that is replaced by C_2 in its bodily use-value form.

In this second case the direct identity of the value determinations of C_1 and C_2 is broken. Sale and purchase are no longer identical, and money appears as a transient equivalent form.[59]

With this differentiation it has become evident that either moment C-M or M-C is the reverse of itself for another commodity. The stable identity of the first contrast (in which each commodity realized its price by posing its own exchange value in that of the other) is now ruptured. Instead, it is apparent that the exchange of a particular commodity A for its equivalent M is equally the exchange of some other commodity B's exchange value (also expressed in M) for commodity A as a use-value. The closed unity of the C-M-C exchange is overcome, and money has emerged as a specific magnitude related to an entire series of measure relations that form an ever-extending web of exchange circuits. In this "circulation of commodities"[60] money's determinateness is no longer limited to its bind with the two particular commodities of the former C_1-M-C_2 specification.

Here money "first shows itself to be a real measure; for it now appears as a determinate being which is both one and the same. . . and also quantitatively varied."[61] Its determination has passed from specifying quantity to real measure.

55. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 5, p. 402.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 403.
57. Marx, *Grundrisse*, p. 212.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 260.
59. MEW, Vol. 23, p. 125.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 126.
61. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 5, p. 403.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

When money showed itself as the medium that let each commodity realize its price by posing its own exchange value in that of the other, it manifested being-for-self by negating the distinction between its qualitatively determined sides, C_1 and C_2.[62]

However, in so doing, the self-determination of the relation was also superseded in this negative unity. As Hegel writes, "a self-subsistent whole of this kind, just because it is a real being-for-self, is at the same time a repulsion into *distinct self-subsistent* somethings."[63] When C_1-M and M-C_2 distinguished themselves from each other, money became placed into relation with an entire network of commodity exchange, which replaced its own single measure determination with a whole series of measures. Here, "measure itself. . .has shown that it is unstable in its own self, and like the quantum as such, has its determinateness in other measures relations."[64] The circulation of commodities is this web of measures that "have become in themselves relations of measures which are themselves specified."[65]

The qualitative quantum is therefore reduced to an element of this sphere of exchange, and "it preserves itself through the presence of its indifferent, quantitative character and at the same time functions as a specifying moment of a new measure relation."[66] Money thus assumes a negative relation to the individual commodities facing it in each of its manifold exchange determinations. Now it seems always ready to remove commodities from circulation according to the M-C circuit. The path of circulation has become a constant movement of money away from its starting point. Money functions as "a transient and objective reflex of the price of commodities,"[67] always within circulation. As such, money's quality becomes masked in its quantitative element,[68] sublating its character as a material object of human need. The bodily form of money collapses into its exchange value, and money has become a symbol of itself, a mere symbol of value. As this *currency*, money *posits* its use-value as exchange value, and instead of being a means of exchange, money has become a means of payment. "Its qualitative side falls and its *relationship to its other* becomes that quantitative mode of relationship which constitutes the specific determination of this self-subsistent measure."[69]

Money as means of payment embodies the determinateness of the self-subsistent measure which is related to a plurality of other measures that it excludes from itself. Since this relation remains quantitative, the self-subsistent measure also continues itself into these opposed quanta, and their overcoming is separable into the two moments which united to produce it. "This measure, based on such a relation, is thus infected with its own indifference; it is in its own self something external and alterable in its

62. *Ibid.*, p. 409.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 412.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 416.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 413.
66. *Ibid.*, p. 417.
67. MEW, Vol. 23, p. 143.
68. *Ibid.*, p. 417.
69. *Ibid.*, p. 419.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

relation to itself."[70]

What this means with respect to money is that first, money stands as an *ideal* means of purchase which allows commodities to realize themselves as use-values *before* realizing their price in their actual exchange with money. Secondly, money converts itself into the material form of the commodity before this use-value has undergone the exchange metamorphosis that presents it in the value form.

Together, these two moments reveal a pattern of circulation that has become money-commodity-money. Instead of being a transient value form, money poses itself in the commodity to then return to itself in this its other. Whereas previously it had served as the mediation of the extremes of commodities' exchange value and use-value, money now makes this relation the mediation of its very own self.[71]

Money is first only advanced, rather than being spent as the converted value form of the commodity. The commodity appears as a particular use-value which directly embodies the particular exchange-value specified by its price. When the commodity actually changes places with the money (the commodity-money moment of money-commodity-money), this commodity has already realized both its use and exchange values, leaving the money as a self-subsistent general exchange value without any enduring reference to this opposing article. Here "money and the commodity represent only different modes of the existence of value itself, the money its general mode, and the commodity its particular. . . mode."[72] With this determinateness, money has become the universal commodity which is in its own self this beyond where it becomes differentiated into general and particular forms whose relation once again posits money as the independent form of exchange value.

This persistent presence of money is "an affirmatively present, qualitative foundation which, as also the continuity of the measure *with itself* in its externality, must contain in its quality the principle of the specification of this externality."[73] The determinateness that this M-C-M exchange embodies is an exclusive measure which is for itself in its beyond as both "another measure relation and also as another merely quantitative relation; it is determined as in itself a specifying unity which produces measure relations within itself."[74] However, this exclusive measure contains within it the moment of quantitative determinate being that is open to alteration. The magnitude of the relation is variable, and this *indifference* to the qualitative substratum is also the negation of the qualitative moment and the positing of a new something. This leads the determinateness to impel itself into the *measureless*.[75]

Here the specification of the universal commodity is first a self-preservation into its beyond that surpasses itself in a manner that is indifferent to its

70. *Ibid.*, p. 436.
71. Marx, *Grundrisse*, p. 331.
72. MEW, Vol. 23, p. 168.
73. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 5, p. 436.
74. *Ibid.*, p. 436.
75. *Ibid.*, p. 442.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

quality. In the relation M_1-C-M_2, M_1 and M_2 distinguish themselves by the difference of their magnitude. By being a greater amount of money, M_2 is the continuity of M_1 in its otherness. This alteration is an external distinction which is immediately given, and whose actual magnitude remains unspecified —the particular and general form of value emerge groundlessly from the substratum of the universal commodity. However, this quantitative progress posits "the negation of the qualitative moment contained therein and hence of the merely quantitative externality too."[76] A new measure relation emerges, for M_2 is qualitatively the same as M_1, being itself another exclusive measure that also constitutes the independent form of exchange value.

As Hegel writes, "this transition of the qualitative and the quantitative into each other proceeds on the basis of their unity, and the meaning of this process is only to *show* or to *posit* the *determinate being* of such a substrate underlying the process, a substrate which is their unity."[77]

The external differentiation of M_2 from M_1 is actually a determination of the unity of the universal commodity which conserves and maintains itself. This quantitative distinction is something that the independent form of exchange value has *in itself*. Even though this quantitative progression establishes M_2 as an independent value, opposing the circulation which produced it, its negative relation to this process is a positive moment for the essential substance that has *conserved* itself in this opposition. "The alteration is only a change of a *state*, and the *subject* of the transition is posited as remaining the *same* in the process."[78]

Money's abstract unity of quality and quantity is overcome in this infinite substance that has its moments in *both* quality and quantity. "Value is here the active factor in a process, in which, while constantly assuming the form in turn of money and commodities, it at the same time changes in magnitude, differentiating itself by throwing off surplus-value from itself"[79] and *determining* this its self-expansion.

The movement M_1-C-M_2 has emerged as a self-determined, self-subsistent process whose moments are not indifferently related, but immanently specified by the process itself. Measure is reduced "to the status of a moment"[80] and the "determinateness of exchange value itself, or the measure of price, must now itself disappear as an act of circulation."[81]

The determinateness of Essence has finally been arrived at. The sphere of commodity exchange has realized itself in "the totality in which every determination of being is sublated and contained."[82] Capital has emerged as the exchange value that conserves and perpetuates itself in and through circulation at the same time that it presupposes itself.[83] It posits itself against itself in this act of value production, all the time remaining "at one with itself

76. *Ibid.*, pp. 443-444.
77. *Ibid.*, p. 444.
78. *Ibid.*
79. MEW, Vol. 23, p. 169.
80. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 5, p. 445.
81. Marx, *Grundrisse*, p. 235.
82. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 5, p. 456.
83. Marx, *Grundrisse*, p. 262.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in this its own difference from itself." Commodity and money are simple elements in its process, and capital is in each one as its connection with its other, its opposite.[84]

The movement of determination has overcome the simple being of circulation, and now the deeper realm of the sphere of production has come to reveal itself in its necessary unfolding. The self-development of determinateness from quantity to essence is embodied in this all important transition, where the capitalist mode of production proceeds to show itself as the ground for the relations of commodity exchange.

The process of determination of the so-called Labor Theory of Value lifts the curtain.

The Self-Development of the Labor Theory of Value

Capital has emerged from the structure of commodity exchange as the immediate unity of commodity and money that has its own mediation in their process of valorization. The entire world of commodities is contained in ideal form within it, for capital is the product of its own movement as circulation at the same time that it faces this circulation as its presupposition.

The self-development of capital here proceeds in the pure language of the determinations of Essence. As Hegel writes, Essence "*differentiates* the determinations which are *implicit* (*an sich*) in it...it sets itself over against itself and is infinite being-for-self only in so far as it is at one with itself in this its own difference from itself."[85] At first, Essence is this simple negativity that is indifferent to the determinateness of being whose very sublation as otherness is equally essence's being for self. Because of the coincidence of this indifference towards the determinate, and the necessary supersession of it, essence "has to posit in its *own* sphere the determinateness that is only implicit in it, in order to give itself determinate being, and then being-for-self."[86]

In just this way, capital is first an immediate identity that must abolish itself as the unity of commodity exchange so that this act of circulation becomes a simple determinate relation that emerges as an element of capital itself.[87] By way of the process of production, this self-development is made clear.

With the world of commodities and money being the appearance in which capital poses itself, there is a distinction in this identity which presents capital as an ideality of the whole sphere of exchange that is in immediate relation to it. This is found in the simple enunciation that capital is merely a different being from the totality of exchange-value from where it has emerged and in whose process it conserves itself. However, this sphere in which capital appears or shines forth is not simply distinct from the unity of capital. It is rather distinguished from it as a being that is non-capital. As the independent exchange-value that preserves and perpetuates itself in and through

84. *Ibid.*, p. 261.
85. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 6, p. 15.
86. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
87. Marx, *Grundrisse*, pp. 332-333.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

circulation at the same time that it presupposes itself,[88] capital is a reflection in itself that renders its otherness a negative posed by capital in opposition to itself.

Labor-power is precisely this otherness that is stripped of all objective existence in the totality of exchange-value. It is the non-being of independent value, which nonetheless is the beyond in which capital produces itself as universal wealth. As such, labor-power is merely the possibility of exchange value in general. In a purely negative, subjective form, labor-power reflects the same totality and abstraction of individual exchange-values that is contained in capital's ideality. Labor-power presents itself as a purely formal *capacity* to realize capital in its self-valorization.[89] "General wealth (in contrast to capital in which it exists objectively, as reality)" is the "general possibility" of labor.[90]

This positing of labor-power is an embodiment of the advance from Essence to Illusory Being in the process of pure specification. Here, the simple difference between essence and the being to which it immediately is related emerges as an indifferent relation contained in essence's own reflection. What is contrasted to essence as the unessential *is* an immediacy that is essence's own. This being is not an other, whose difference falls outside of the indeterminate relation of the essential and the unessential and into a third entity, but an "immediate that is *in and for itself* a nullity. . . *illusory* being."[91] Its otherness is precisely essence's own negation of its determinate being. It has its nullity as its very essence, while "illusory being is not. It is the negative posited as negative."[92] Furthermore, this negativity and reflected immediacy of illusory being are not only constituted *by* essence, but *are* the moments of essence itself.[93] The posited and simple determinateness of illusory being is essence's own immediacy, as the "self-subsistent, which *is* as self-mediated through its negation."[94] Illusory being is not a nullity within essence's reflection, but rather is this reflection itself where essence's *own* immediacy and negativity are in identical union.[95]

Within the discourse of Capital, this self-development is constituted by the presentation of labor-power as the non-being of capital which is also capital's immediate existence as the negativity of independent value. The nullity of labor-power is maintained only through its negative relation to capital. Since labor is the non-being of capital that is posited by capital as its negative, it is the formal possibility of exchange value in which capital also realizes itself as universal wealth. The pure subjectivity of labor power, represented as the potentiality of the totality of exchange value, is immediately a positive relation, for labor-power is only a capital's own living source of value.[96] And

88. *Ibid.*, p. 262.
89. *Ibid.*, p. 296.
90. *Ibid.*
91. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 6, p. 19.
92. *Ibid.*
93. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
94. *Ibid.*
95. *Ibid.*
96. Marx, *Grundrisse*, p. 296.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

capital *is* only as self-mediated through its negation, labor-power. Labor-power is thus a reflection of capital within itself that must realize capital's existence.

As such, labor-power is no longer simply the non-being of capital—it has now emerged in positive relation to capital, acquiring the determination of pure use-value in its opposition to capital. Capital must bring labor-power back into relation with itself as part of its process, in order to affirm itself as capital.[97] It must face labor-power as an equivalent exchange value, equivalent in that it is sufficient to pose labor-power in opposition to itself. In this manner capital enters into an exchange with labor-power, trading what exchange value is necessary to sustain its opposite as the pure capacity to realize value. Capital presents itself as value existing for itself, just as the labor-power facing it has being for self in the laborer.[98]

This coming to be of the sale of labor-power has proceeded upon the determinateness of reflection, as it has emerged from the specification of illusory being. With the development of illusory being as a relation of essence's own reflection, the self-related negativity of essence has become the negating of its *own* self. Since essence is now "immediacy as a returning movement, as a coincidence of the negative with itself, it is equally a negative of the negative as negative. . . reflection-into-self is essentially the presupposing of that from which it is the return."[99]

In just this manner, capital relates to labor-power as its own pure use-value, grasping itself in both negation and simple equality. However, because this reflection has risen above simple difference, and acquired the determinateness of labor-power's positive relation to capital, capital faces the pure use-value labor-power both as immediately opposed to it, and as the presupposition of its own development. Labor-power opposes it as something external, determined in its own right. This is the worker, formally posed as a person existing for himself, separate from his capacity to work,[100] and stripped of all objectivity beyond his immediate existence.[101] This is labor power as self-related, yet facing capital. On its own side, capital presents itself as value existing for itself, related to the free laborer as a capitalist, such that their opposition is external to each other's self-related determination. For the worker, his labor-power is a use-value only in that it *is* exchange value, and not an element in capital's self-affirmation. For the capitalist, labor-power has an exchange value because it *is* pure use-value in its relation *with* capital.[102] The basis of these immediate self-relations is, however, capital's presupposing of labor-power. And this is concretely achieved in its opposition to labor-power as an equivalent exchange value whose determination is such that its value is sufficient to pose and maintain labor-power in opposition to itself. Because of this, the identity of labor-power and capital is posited,

97. *Ibid.*, p. 274.
98. *Ibid.*, p. 303.
99. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 6, pp. 26-27.
100. Marx, *Grundrisse*, p. 289.
101. *Ibid.*, p. 296.
102. *Ibid.*, p. 306.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and through the free exchange between worker and capitalist, what was an external relation between universal wealth and labor-power is now reflected into each of these two entities. With the completion of the sale of labor-power, it is now capital that divides itself according to its form and substance, embodying each element *as well* as their relation.[103] The immediate opposition of capital and non-capital is now explicitly mediated by capital itself. With this, the actual labor process has been posited.

Here the embodiment of external reflection has passed into the determinateness of determining reflection, to culminate its self-development of determinate essence. As the outcome of illusory being, external reflection presupposed its opposing being as a self-related immediacy whose determinateness was only an external moment to its act of reflection.[104] In so doing, however, the externally reflecting essence and the self-related being were both established as identical in the same indifference of their content to the form of the relation. Since the external reflection was the basis of their opposition, its identification is nothing other than the immanent reflection of the self-related determinateness of the essence and its being.[105]

This is just how the opposition of worker and capitalist, presupposed by capital in its appearance as the equivalent exchange value of labor-power, is an identity which emerges from the very content of worker and capitalist, whose existence for themselves is based on meeting and recognizing each other's will in the free exchange of labor-power. So is expressed the process of determining reflection which emerges when the positedness of external reflection has shown itself to be "*only* a positedness with respect to essence."[106] Here what were external self-related determinations have shown themselves to be in perfect unity with the external reflection that actually had absolutely presupposed them as determinations of its own return-to-self. Through the exchange of labor-power, capital is this determining reflection that really posits the character of worker and capitalist as well as their relation of contract. This is reflection that *is* as "the relation to its otherness within itself."[107] Both the content of reflection and the form in which this content is determinate are contained within essence itself. Essence is related to an other such that the related term and its relation are no longer distinct.[108] Determining reflection really overcomes the distinguishing it is based upon. essence has emerged as a determinate essence, or *an essentiality*, where otherness and relation-to-other have collapsed into each other within essence's pure equality-with-self.[109]

Within such process of determinateness, the exchange of labor-power with capital has now posited capital as a determinate essence distinguishing itself in function of its content as a simple process of production, and, in function of its form, as a process of autovalorization.[110] However, although capital has

103. *Ibid.*, pp. 301-302.
104. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 6, pp. 28-29.
105. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
106. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
107. *Ibid.*, p. 35.
108. *Ibid.*, p. 35.
109. *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.
110. Marx, *Grundrisse*, pp. 310-311.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

emerged as the substantial relation of its differentiation as form and content, it is at first merely a unilateral relation within this distinction. Capital has appropriated its opposite, labor-power, and made it one of its constituent elements, but it has done so only by absorbing it as an *activity* that conserves and augments capital as its finality.[111]

As a result, capital has immediately realized its substance of self-subsistent exchange value and its form of self-expansion as distinct elements of its content alone. Labor concretely embodies capital as formal process, and what opposes it is capital as pure passive object of this process, material.[112] Capital's substantial aspect here appears as a function of labor.[113] It has been reduced to its pure substance, and all relation to its form has disappeared. The work process has become the activity of labor itself, and capital finds itself as raw material and instrument of labor, as abstraction of itself in movement.[114]

In the language of pure specification, what is before us is that equality-with-self that is *essential* identity, having brought itself to unity.[115] Determinate essence, or essentiality, differentiates itself such that what is distinguished is "a non-being which is the non-being of itself."[116] Reflection has become an internal repulsion that is identity by immediately drawing itself inward, collapsing within itself, and distinguishing nothing. The contrast of labor as a formal activity facing capital as the pure passive object of its process is just this determinateness of an essentiality whose self-equality "is the passage beyond itself into the dissolution of itself."[117] With capital doubling itself as labor and simple object of labor, it is presenting itself as its own non-being, distinguishing itself so as to reduce itself to a bare substance negated by its own non-being, labor.

This relation of essential identity is nothing other than absolute difference, for it presents an absolute negativity that is self-related through this very identity.[118] This difference gathers together essentiality and the identity through which it asserted itself. Because here identity is immediately self-reflection, and the other element is difference in itself, "The distinguished terms *subsist* as indifferently different towards one another because each is self-identical."[119] The resulting diversity consists of self-related moments, indifferent to each other, as well as to their own determinations.

This self-development of determinateness becomes the unfolding of capital within itself as simple substance abolishing the opposition active worker—passive object of labor,[120] reuniting the passive substance of capital with the pure form of labor. Here absolute difference manifests itself in *labor*'s active relation with itself as a process of production. As difference in

111. *Ibid.*, p. 209
112. *Ibid.*, p. 302.
113. *Ibid.*, p. 298.
114. *Ibid.*, p. 303.
115. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 6, p. 39.
116. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
117. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
118. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
119. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
120. Marx, *Grundrisse*, p. 298.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and for itself, labor consumes the bare stuff that is capital, impressing it with form, discarding its own pure subjectivity, and objectifying itself in this substance that it works upon.[121] In so doing, however, labor has united the difference in itself of its negating work with the essential identity that a passive capital embodied. This unity has taken place within labor's own act of determination, and the self-relatedness of each moment subsists indifferent to the other as distinct objective forms that embody for labor its own aspect of identity and difference.

The labor process now develops under two aspects. On the one hand, raw materials are impressed with the substance of labor, objectifying the finality of its activity as reaffirmation of capital. On the other hand, the instrument of labor as subjective activity, becoming "the objective means which subjective activity inserts between itself as an object, as its conductor."[122] In other words, the raw material is that substance consumed by labor and the instrument of labor is that substance consuming the pure subjectivity of labor itself.

The raw material and the instrument of labor stand respectively as external identity and external difference, or as likeness and unlikeness, in relation to labor's reflection-into-self. In the raw material labor finds identity by negating the inert formlessness of its object; through the instrument of labor, labor is related to itself negatively, passing its own reflection into this tool.

Nonetheless, in both moments, the reflection-into-self of labor is the negative unity of both, for "The independent self-reference which each of them is, is in fact the self-reference that sublates their distinctiveness and so, too, themselves."[123] This being the case, these indifferent sides of diversity are in *opposition* as moments of this single negative unity.[124]

Labor in process, working on its raw material through the instrument of labor, contains these two aspects within the unity of its act, and each of these aspects *is*, as concomintant elements of a single activity absorbing them both. This relation realizes the determinateness of "positive and negative. . . self-subsistent in that they are the reflection of the *whole* into themselves."[125] And this specification renders each moment positive and negative in its own self, since each maintains itself in so far as its opposite *is*, and in so far as it itself is in identical relation with this its opposite.[126]

However, since determinateness is here a positing of positive and of negative as a single reflection, there is the contradiction of a positing of self-identity that is in opposition to identity.[127] As embodied in the reality of the labor process, this specification comes into being in labor's active engagement with its instrument of labor and raw material. In this movement each aspect asserts itself in helping absorb and eliminate the other relation.

121. *Ibid.*
122. *Ibid.*, pp. 298-299.
123. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 6, p. 51.
124. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
125. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
126. *Ibid.*
127. *Ibid.*, pp. 66-67.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Labor's negative relation to the raw material is also the consuming use of its relation to the instrument of labor and vice versa. Here the labor process actually pushes beyond labor and the two concrete recipients of its self-relation. Their unity in labor's activity has them vanish in an identity that is their destruction as self-subsistent relations.

The pure specification of such contradiction, however, does not halt at a unity that is the null. What perishes is only "the *positedness* of the self-subsistence"[128] which positive and negative constituted. What remains and perseveres is a self-subsistent unity that has returned to itself through the negation of its own posited form as the opposition of positive and negative.[129] This unity is itself posited, excluding itself from itself as the unity of positive and negative.

The product of the labor process emerges within this pure determinateness, thrust forward by the self-annulling relation of labor to itself in its transformation of the raw material through the agency of the instrument of labor. Here is incorporated the given form impressed by the labor, as well as the substance materializing the labor itself. This result is indeed a material object that has been created, and yet no empty thing. The product has emerged as an excluding unity of reflection, that is capital reinstating itself as an active essential relation, now determining itself as *Ground*.

Capital has immediately restored itself as the positor of its own determinateness in the *created* use-value that is the result and sublation of the labor porcess. The elements of this labor process have had their use-value *determined* as substance of exchange value, and their former mode of existence (as capital reduced to pure content) has now been consumed.[130] In the product, capital has reflected itself back into its bare content, and reaffirmed itself as value that is subject, and for whom the labor process as a whole is the form of its self.[131]

This is essence determining itself as ground, posing a self-sublating positedness as its reflection of self-identity. Here reflection determines itself as the negative that is essence's *in itself*.[132] An immediate has emerged as the restored identity of essence that is just as much determined by essence's self-excluding reflection.[133] In this manner, immediate determinate being essentially *presupposes* a ground, and as such, essence has a two-fold determinateness—that of *ground* and the *grounded*. Essence is first *not-positedness*, setting itself over against positedness. Secondly essence is positedness *qua* positedness. Thus essence as ground is an identity of positedness with itself, just as the grounded's "reflection-into-self is the identity of the ground."[134] Here is united the ground's determinate self-identity with the negative identity of the grounded.

128. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
129. *Ibid.*, p. 68.
130. Marx, *Grundrisse*, p. 316.
131. *Ibid.*, p. 311.
132. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 6, p. 80.
133. *Ibid.*, p. 82.
134. *Ibid.*, p. 84.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In this unity essence is distinguished from its mediation, for the two reflections are both determinate, and different from their simple identity. Together they constitute *form* that faces essence, being "the indeterminate, which, in its determinations, is indifferent towards them."[135] Here form's determinations subsist in a dissolution that is the ground of the subsistence they give to themselves. At the same time, essence constitutes itself "as the *simple substrate* which is the *subsisting* of form."[136]

Thus form is just as much related to the "other" in which form subsists as sublated, and simple essence is only an "*inactive* substrate in which the form-determinations subsist and are reflected into themselves."[137] In this *determining* form, sublated positedness has become self-related, *presupposing* its identity in the indeterminate, formless essence to which it is an other. Essence is thus "*determined* as formless identity; it is *matter*."[138]

As embodied in the discourse of capital, this self-development emerges from the material product of the labor process, which is a created use-value that presupposes capital, the process of valorization, at the same time that it sublates the immediate labor process. On the one hand, capital sets itself over against this object as self-expanding value. On the other hand, capital has here developed as the becoming of exchange value whose substance is now constituted by such created use-value.

In uniting its self-identity as process of reproduction of exchange-value with the negative identity of created use-value, capital emerges as a process of production whose elements are themselves the results of its own formative process. This unity of product and elements of production renders capital distinct from its own ground-grounded mediation. There now emerges a simple identification of capital with itself where capital's material constituents appear as self-identical embodiments of invariable value that realize their simple sum in the final product which is their result.

Altogether, these elements comprise a form facing capital. They subsist as indifferently related quantities of value in the very process of production that transforms and negates their determinate existence.

On its own side, capital is the presupposed indipendent value that has now become its own result, in an unchanged form.[139] It is simply the bare inactive substrate of its own decomposition into quantitative values.

Thus the product and the elements of production actually presuppose this empty formless substance that capital has become. In effect, they determine capital as the simple *matter* of their *formal* existence as an equation of equivalent quantitative sums. As Marx writes: "The only process, as regards value, [is] that it sometimes appears as a whole, a unity; then as a division of this unity into certain amounts; finally, as sum."[140] The process of production has emerged as the constitution of the value of capital in its simple sum.

135. *Ibid.*, p. 85.
136. *Ibid.*, p. 86.
137. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
138. *Ibid.*, p. 88.
139. Marx, *Grundrisse*, p. 315.
140. *Ibid.*, p. 314.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This relation of the addition of self-identical quantitative elements of value and the formless capital that is their substrate proceeds as a self-development of determinateness that emerges out of this distinguishing of form and its matter to become the new relation of form and content. With the appearance of matter as an absolute susceptibility to the form that is posed relating itself to this other as its subsistence, the illusory indifference of form and matter is removed. Now the whole relation is a unity of form and matter wherein each reciprocally presupposes the other. In this manner form sublates its own formless self-subsistence by rendering matter as something posited. At the same time, however, it has overcome its own relation to matter as a posited form, and it produces its subsistence on its own account.[141] This movement is no less a transformation taken on by matter itself. For when form has "sublated itself, the determinateness which matter has as against form also disappears, namely, to be an indeterminate subsistence."[142] Matter no longer relates to form in an indeterminate self-identity. Matter is now self-determined in a posited unity with form. In this unity form and matter withdraw, overcoming the subsistence they maintained externally in each other. Here form *is* a material subsistence, and matter *has* a necessary form.[143] Their unity is the *determinate basis* of formed matter "which is at the same time indifferent to form and matter, these being sublated and unessential determinations."[144] This posited unity of form and matter is *content*.

The formal division of capital into elements of value whose simple sum achieves their unity develops itself within the just described process of determination by realizing a union in the determination of abstract labor time. The indifferently related quantities of value that are the elements of capital's process of identification take up into themselves their presupposition of capital's acti y, and acquire a determinate existence as specific quanta of abstract labor time, individual coagulations of capital's bare motion. Alongside this development, capital is no longer a formless substrate, but a whole that embodies and poses a definite sum of values that are inherently related to its own process by finding their measure in amounts of abstract labor time. The product and the elements of production no longer subsist in a formless matter whose simple presence as self-identical independent value grants them life. And nor is capital a formless subsistence in relation to the independent values constituting its process. The specific measures of abstract labor time pose themselves the determinate value of capital as a whole, just as capital posits itself in unity with the product and elements of production by having the expression of its bare activity of valorization, abstract labor time, inform these individual values in a particular manner. In values of abstract labor time the formal moments of capital find material subsistence, and capital itself acquires a necessary form. The determination of abstract labor

141. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 6, p. 90.
142. *Ibid.*, pp. 91-92.
143. *Ibid.*, p. 92.
144. *Ibid.*, p. 94.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

time is the *content* of this process.

The pure process of specification of such a content relation first develops itself as content that is the posited unity of matter and form, as well as something standing opposed to the form of its positedness. The latter form has come to embrace form and matter, just as content is their determinate substrate. In this manner content has in fact withdrawn into its ground, by being the identical element in form and matter that is indifferent to their external determinations. The self-identity of content is not only that unity indifferent to its form; it is also its *essential* form, and thus the identity of a ground relation.[145] Nevertheless, content remains distinct from its ground. Being "determinate in its own self...content is the essential identity of ground with itself in its positedness...[and also] the posited identity over against the ground relation."[146] The immediate determinateness of the content is precisely the negative relation of the form to itself. Ground is therefore a *formal* mediation, since here it "relates itself negatively to itself and makes itself into a positedness."[147] The determinate content is posited both as ground and as the grounded, all the time indifferent to this two-fold form, and in both cases, only one determination.[148] Thus form and content are no longer really distinguishable, since now *"there is nothing in the ground that is not in the grounded, and there is nothing in the grounded that is not in the ground."*[149] The ground has become the exact same content, once as something posited, and again as an essentiality, determinate being reflected-into-self.[150]

This process of self-development from *form* and *content* through *formal ground* acquires spiritual reality with the emergence of living labor as a simple means to capital's self-valorization. When abstract labor time provides the posited unity of capital's simple division as a relation of matter and form, this content also stands outside the form of this entire process. Although abstract labor time is the identical content in both the specific values of the elements of production and the product, and the whole equation grasped in its total aggregate of specified value, it also is indifferent to the external determinations that characterize each of these moments as elements of production, product, and capital (as embracing their process). As something distinct, abstract labor time is the essential identity of capital with itself in its posited relation as an equation of specific created values, and also is itself a posited identity over against this entire process of valorization.

In this way, the immediate existence of this content is actually the negative self-relation of abstract labor time as essential form. The relation of abstract labor time has now developed into a subjective movement that becomes by being submerged in its own determinations as process in the service of capital's self-valorization. Labor is here a value-creating activity by informing

145. *Ibid.*, p. 94.
146. *Ibid.*, p. 95.
147. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
148. *Ibid.*, p. 97.
149. *Ibid.*
150. *Ibid.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

already existent elements of abstract labor time with capital's movement of created value. As Marx writes, "living labor is no more than a means to imbue existing value with value; in other words, to make it into capital...this process appears as that of the auto-valorization of capital."[151] Abstract labor time actively communes with itself as capital's own forceful self-relation that throws itself forward as a production of specifically created value. As materialized social labor that conserves itself and grows by absorbing living labor, capital has become value creating value, itself in movement.[152]

The content of the elements of production, abstract labor time, now engages in active opposition to them, acquiring living vitality as labor that conserves and reproduces their value by its simple *act*. The former labor time embodied by the raw materials and instrument of labor is replaced and preserved in the product and the instrument of production that remain at the process' end, not by the expenditure of the labor, but rather through *capital's* self-identity, which is *only* activated by labor's appearance as an active abstract labor time. Labor itself establishes its own value upon the abstract labor time that it has expended in realizing itself, and this value is swallowed up as well into the created product that completes capital's self-affirmation. The process of living labor as simple means of the process of valorization is a motion that is both the foundation of capital and its own creation. It is no longer possible to distinguish capital's existence as elements of value in process and the unity of this movement itself. Living labor's activization of created value as value that creates value is capital in its posited development, as well as in its essential form.

This is the tautological relation of formal ground. Here ground is the same determination of content, once as something posited, and again as essentiality, determinate being reflected-into-itself. Nevertheless, since this simple determinateness of the content does not contain the form of the ground relation within itself, and is indifferent to it, it is external to this form, and distinct from it.[153] The ground and the grounded are both in *their specific character* the identity of the whole with itself, and these immediate, self-identical determinations constitute the difference within the form of the relation. Because of this utter simplicity of their difference, the unity of the ground and the grounded is an empty, contentless relation—"a *one* or a *something* as an external combination of them."[154]

Here, formal ground has passed over into the relation of real ground. This determinateness is two-fold. First, the content of the relation is in continuity with itself in the positedness that renders it the simple identical element of ground and the grounded. Secondly, this relation comprises the

151. Marx, *Un Chapitre Inédit du Capital,* unpublished in German original, trans. Roger Dangeville (Paris, 1971), p. 139.
152. *Ibid.*, p. 139.
153. Hegel, *Werke*, Vol. 6, p. 98.
154. *Ibid.*, p. 103.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

additional determination of an unessential form, that is free from the ground and is an immediate manifoldness.[155] This latter element, the non-ground aspect of the relation, is "an external bond which does not contain the unessential manifold content as *posited*; it is therefore likewise only a *substrate*."[156] Thus the immediate identity of ground and the grounded, and the something which relates their distinct content, is the emergence of two different substrates. They in turn present a new relation of an external ground which is related to an immediate content that it has not posited, but whose diversified determinations it does bring into combination, determining "which is ground and which is posited by the ground."[157]

Thus real ground has withdrawn into *another* ground, making itself a positedness. This new ground is the complete ground, which is identical with the real ground that it now is grounding. This "new ground into which that merely posited, external 'togetherness' has sublated itself is, as its reflection-into-self, the *absolute relation* of the two determinations of the content."[158]

This process of pure specification becomes capital's self-development through the emergence of the productive process as a creation of a surplus value contained in the resultant product.

The coincidence of ground and grounded in living labor's informing of materialized abstract labor time as value that creates new value is a determinateness of content that is really external to the form of this whole relation. Living labor's process and capital's auto-valorization are the immediate self-identical determinations that, as such, make up the empty difference in their identity as ground and grounded... The thing that combines them in their diversity is simply the surplus value to be found through the created product. Both elements, living labor's process and capital's auto-valorization, are in continuity with themselves in this posited value that *is* their additional specification whose immediate particular measure is first unrelated to the ground. This indifference leaves surplus value merely a bare substrate of the relation of labor's expenditure as capital's means of valorization. However, this leaves both the realization of labor and surplus value as different contents related to a ground which has not posited them, but does bring their specifications into a combination in which the surplus value is now posited by the expenditure of labor.

This new ground is the restoration of the immediate labor process, here incorporated in capital's determinate auto-valorization. Here are joined the two aspects of the entire movement of production, grasped in their immediate unity: on the one hand, the simple process of production in which the activity of labor conserved the use-value quality of past labor by transforming the material substance of the passive capital facing it, and giving it a new form; on the other hand, the process of valorization which has just emerged when

155. *Ibid.*, p. 104.
156. *Ibid.*
157. *Ibid.*, p. 105.
158. *Ibid.*, pp. 109-110.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

capital's identification with itself through the absorption of living labor had conserved the quantity of objectified abstract labor time found in its elements of production.

The contrasting unity of these two moments reveals that the newly created product contains a specific surplus value, whose quantitative determination derives from the difference between the exchange value that capital has paid to the worker for his labor-power, and the exchange value that the abstract labor time of his work has realized. The relation of living labor to surplus value is now concretely posed in this determinateness of complete ground. The identity contained in this contrast of the two aspects of capital's process of production complete the self-development of the so-called "Labor Theory of Value."

l'homme et la société

Numéro double
Nos 37-38

Juillet - Août - Septembre 1975
Octobre - Novembre - Décembre 1975

Henri LEFEBVRE : L'Etat dans le monde moderne

Anouar ABDEL-MALEK : Le concept de spécificité : Positions

G. CARCHEDI : Reproduction des classes sociales au niveau des rapports de production

Michel MAFFESOLI : Aux origines de la société de contrôle

Jacques RANCIERE : Utopistes, bourgeois et prolétaires

J.W. FREIBERG : Détermination et liberté dans la pensée humaine — Une perspective dialectique

Arieh YAARI : Assimilation versus différenciation — Le phénomène national aux Etats-Unis d'Amérique

Pierre LANTZ : Progrès et projet

Daniel VIDAL : Le texte potlatch : la perte tourainienne de l'objet recherché

Colette CAPITAN PETER : Révolutions bourgeoises et idéologie essentialiste

Zaga GOLUBOVIC : La révolution comme transformation radicale de la situation culturelle et sociale de l'homme

Serge LATOUCHE : Sens de l'histoire et signification linguistique

André REGNIER : Linguistique et méthodologie

Noelle BISSERET : Classes sociales et langage : Au-delà de la problématique privilège/handicap

Editions Anthropos

Direction - Rédaction - Admnistration - Abonnements

12, avenue du Maine, Paris 15, Tél. 548-42-58 — 222-76-82

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books available from **TELOS PRESS:**

THE MIRROR OF PRODUCTION
Jean Baudrillard

Translated with Introduction by Mark Poster. A survey of Marxist theory which concludes that the productivist model it has generated is no aberration, but the logical outcome of the theory's fundamental flaws. Available in paper only. 176 pages.

HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, AND CULTURE IN THE YOUNG GRAMSCI
Edited by Pedro Cavalcanti and Paul Piccone

Selections drawn from newspaper and magazine articles dealing with the pressing political issues of Gramsci's time: the Russian Revolution, World War I, socialism, and related themes. 158 pages.

CULTURAL CREATION IN MODERN SOCIETY
Lucien Goldmann

A collection of essays dealing with a wide range of topics, from culture to politics to social organization. A detailed Introduction by William Mayrl prefaces the book. Forthcoming in May. Approximately 160 pages.

ESSAYS ON THE NEW WORKING CLASS
Serge Mallet

Edited by Dick Howard and Dean Savage. The three divisions of the book—'Evolution of the Working Class,' 'Working Class and Technocracy,' and 'Workers' Control'—reflect Mallet's concerns here. 240 pages.

MARX AND ENGELS ON LITERATURE AND ART
Edited by Lee Baxandall and Stefan Morawski

Introduction by Stefan Morawski. This anthology contains virtually everything written by Marx and Engels on the subject of aesthetic theory. Bibliography and Index included. 175 pages.

TOWARDS A NEW MARXISM
Edited by Bart Grahl and Paul Piccone

Papers by Breines, Buhle, Colletti, Dunayevskaya, Gross, Kosok, Parsons, Piccone, and others, presented at the First *Telos* Conference in 1970. 240 pages.

---

name _____

address _____

city, state, zip code or country _____

TELOS PRESS
c/o Sociology Department
Washington University
St. Louis, MO 63130 USA.

- ☐ *The Mirror of Production* ($2.50)
- ☐ *Gramsci's Early Writings*, paper ($2.50)
- ☐ *Gramsci's Early Writings*, cloth ($6.00)
- ☐ *Cultural Creation*, paper ($3.00)
- ☐ *Cultural Creation*, cloth ($6.50)
- ☐ *The New Working Class*, paper ($3.50)
- ☐ *The New Working Class*, cloth ($7.00)
- ☐ *Marx and Engels on Art*, paper ($2.95)
- ☐ *Marx and Engels on Art*, cloth ($6.95)
- ☐ *Towards a New Marxism*, paper ($2.75)
- ☐ *Towards a New Marxism*, cloth ($8.50)

*Total amount enclosed: $_____

*Payment must be included for all orders from individuals. Foreign orders (including Canada), please add 10% to cover extra postage charges. Checks should be made payable to *Telos Press*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOTES AND COMMENTARY:

A Falling Rate of Intelligence?

by Russell Jacoby

The law of the falling rate of intelligence is even more elusive than the law of the falling rate of profit. For unlike the falling rate of profit its effect undermines its conceptualization. Not exempt from itself, the law of the falling rate of intelligence is decreasingly comprehensible. It is a tendency that can only be emphatically grasped in advance—when it is not yet fully visible; later it is experienced and witnessed but cannot be understood. Marx himself commented often that the decline of political economy as a science, a phenomenon he dated around 1830, was a social development traceable to the elevation of the bourgeoisie to political power. The victorious bourgeoisie renounced "genuine scientific research." "It was thenceforth no longer a question, whether this theorem or that was true, but whether it was useful to capital or harmful, expedient or inexpedient..."[1] However, these comments were not worked into a theory. Now it may be too late; the law of the falling rate of intelligence has taken its toll. Yet as with the falling rate of profit, this is a *tendency,* not an iron law; counter-tendencies are not only possible, but probable. For this reason a discussion of the falling rate of intelligence can at least hope to be not simply more evidence of its fall.

Before examining the falling rate of intelligence it is necessary to recall the essentials of the rate of profit. The rate of profit is determined directly by the rate of surplus value and inversely by the organic composition of capital. Both the rate of surplus value and the organic composition increase during the course of capitalism. This suggests that the direction of the rate of profit is indeterminate.[2] However, increases in the rate of surplus value are limited by natural and historical boundaries—which cannot be discussed here.[3] Over time these increases cannot offset the increase in the organic composition, which becomes the decisive factor driving down the rate of profit.

The organic composition of capital is defined by both the technical and value components of the total capital: the ratio of machinery to living labor, and constant to variable capital.[4] In the history of capitalism the first term increases; this is the definition of productivity; or, machinery and constant capital replace living labor and variable capital. Living labor relatively contracts. Both the rate of surplus value and the organic composition increase because the latter—in developed capitalism—is a condition for the former; surplus value is increased by increasing constant capital and machinery.[5] Inasmuch as the rate of profit is calculated not simply on the basis of

1. Marx, *Capital I* (Moscow, 1961), p. 15. Cf. H. Grossmann, *Marx, die klassische Nationalökonomie und das Problem der Dynamik (1941)* (Frankfurt, 1969), pp. 9ff.

2. This is Paul Sweezy's conclusion in *The Theory of Capitalist Development (1942)* (New York, 1968), p. 102.

3. See Roman Rosdolsky for this and a critique of Sweezy: *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Marxschen 'Kapital'* (Frankfurt, 1969), Band II, pp. 467-483.

4. See Fritz Halbach for a good discussion of the complexities of the organic composition of capital: *Kapitalismus ohne Krisen?* (Giessen, 1972), pp. 15f.

5. There are of course many controversies about the nature and measurement of the organic composition, and if in fact it is increasing. While it is generally agreed that the organic composition increased in the early stages of capitalism, it has been argued that in recent decades, e.g., since 1920, due to capital-saving technology it has declined. For one position see Geoff

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

surplus value extracted, but must include expenditures to increase the rate of surplus value, as these increase, the profit rate falls. The critical relation here: the profit rate falls as the relative amount of living labor contracts, as the organic composition rises.

This is a piece of economic logic which is more than economic; it is simultaneously social, political, and human. The labor process of capitalism is its life process. The organic composition of capital is a social relation; it informs not only immediate work conditions, but the reproduction of society. "When we consider bourgeois society in the long view and as a whole," wrote Marx, "then the final result of the process of social production always appears as the society itself, i.e., the human being itself in its social relations... The direct production process itself here appears only as a moment."[6] In the "long view and as a whole" the organic composition can be considered as Marx once called it, the relation of "active and passive components"[7]— the relation of living and dead labor. Or, it refers to the composition of society: the relative weight of human subjectivity and alien objectivity. *In the course of capitalism the increasing organic composition of society yields the increasing decomposition of human subjectivity.*

The domination of passive components—dead, congealed labor—infuses the social relations out of which the individual is constituted. The organic composition issues into what Adorno has called the "organic composition of man," that is, men and women. "The organic composition of man is growing."[8] Decisive for intelligence is that the relative proportions of passivity and activity edge towards the absolute domination of passivity. Classifying and blind receptivity replace "the spontaneity of the comprehending understanding that is inseparable from the idea of critical reason."[9] This passivity, an alienation unique to capitalism, derives from the "penurious subjectivity" of living labor which is severed from the means of life.[10] Evidently there is activity, but activity cast in a passive form; or activity that is not self-determined but prescribed and subordinated.

The falling rate of intelligence is an expression of the increasing organic composition of man, or the relative dwindling of spontaneous living subjectivity. The organic composition of man refers to a process of human and social petrification. Social petrification does not involve the dislodgement of living substances by minerals dissolved in water, but by the commodity form dissolved in the invisible social relations. This is a process that keeps pace with the organic composition of capital. At a certain point the size and cost of the apparatus necessary to extract increasing amounts of surplus value offset the amount of surplus value extracted; at this point, living labor has contracted beyond profitability. Intelligence as a social category is subjected to the same forces; it declines as living labor and subjectivity relatively shrink. This surfaces as "the eclipse of reason in bourgeois thought in the age of monopoly capital."[11]

The absolute decline of intelligence defines a crisis—for whom and what kind? The contours of this crisis are difficult to foresee. Does the ideology of capitalism

Hodgson, "The Theory of the Falling Rate of Profit," *New Left Review* 84 (March-April, 1974), pp. 55ff. For a different interpretation, see Mario Cogoy, "The Fall of the Rate of Profit and the Theory of Accumulation," *Bulletin of the Conference of Socialist Economists* (Winter 1973), pp. 52ff. Cf. Paul Mattick, *Marx and Keynes* (London, 1971), pp. 86ff.

6. Marx, *Grundrisse* (Penguin, 1973), p. 712.
7. Marx, *Capital III* (Moscow, 1962), p. 143.
8. T.W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia* (London, 1974), p. 229.
9. H. Marcuse, *Negations* (Boston, 1968), p. 62.
10. Marx, *Grundrisse*, p. 455.
11. Paul Baran, Paul Sweezy, *Monopoly Capital* (New York, 1968), p. 122.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

presuppose a minimal intelligence without which it is exposed as a lie?[12] Or is the fall of intelligence the structural tendency as well as the solution? As with the falling profit rate there is no preordained breakdown, only that possibility which vies with attempts of restoration. The crisis of the falling rate of intelligence suggests the possibility of the seizure of the means of intelligence, not its necessity. Prior to this crisis point, however, the tendencies of the falling rate of intelligence are visible. For this reason an examination of the fall turns into its "opposite, namely to explain why this fall is not greater and more rapid. There must be some counteracting influ ıces which cross and annul the effect of the general law."[13]

One major counter-tendency is waste production. Louis Boudin in 1907 already stated that "the capitalist system lives and thrives by waste."[14] Recent estimates place waste production as high as three-fifths of all production.[15] Waste production props up the stagnating economy, though not forever. Inasmuch as waste production is spurred by government deficit spending and falls out of the process of social reproduction "there is a slow but steady depreciation of incomes and debts due to inflation."[16] Intellectual waste production and intellectual inflation—the depreciation of the critical substance of thought—are the intellectuals' wares that sustain private accumulation.

Waste production is not simply identical to luxury consumption. Rather in late capitalism it assumes a special form, altering the relationship between use and exchange value. The use value of the commodity—the substratum that carries the exchange value—is liquidated as an obstacle to accumulation. The drive to accumulate overcomes the relatively limited market saturated with commodities that function in some useful manner by eliminating their utility; or reconstituting their use value on a second 'aesthetic' level of appearances which bears no relation to their real use value.[17] In this way realization is not hindered by a surfeit of useful commodities; for example, while the market might be restricted by the amount of shaving lotion it can absorb when this is purchased for its useful properties, this restriction is bypassed once the lotion is sold, purchased and consumed for other reasons—its powers of status, attraction, prestige, etc.[18]

---

12. "The rate at which they [the public] are reduced to stupidity must not fall behind the rate at which their intelligence is increasing." M. Horkheimer, T.W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York, 1972), p. 145.
13. Marx, *Capital III*, p. 227.
14. Louis Boudin, *The Theoretical System of Karl Marx (1907)* (New York, 1967), p. 246.
15. See Michael Kidron, *Capitalism and Theory* (London, 1974), pp. 35ff.
16. Paul Mattick *Marx and Keynes* (London, 1971), p. 152.
17. "If the commodity is always composed of both exchange value and use value, the pure use value—the illusion of which is preserved in the cultural goods of the thoroughly capitalist society—is replaced by the exchange value which exactly as exchange value fraudulently assumes the function of use value." T.W. Adorno, "Ueber den fetisch-charakter in der Musik und die regression des Hörens" (1938) in Adorno, *Dissonanzen* (Göttingen, 1958), p. 20. The notion of the fake reconstitution of the use value on an 'aesthetic' level is developed in W.F. Haug, *Kritik der Warenästhetik* (Frankfurt, 1971), and *Warenästhetik, Sexualität und Herrschaft* (Frankfurt, 1972).
18. To avoid misunderstanding, in question here is not the ailments of the 'affluent' society, as if there are absolutely too many useful goods produced; but there can be too many commodities, not absolutely, but in regard to capitalist demand. "The word *over-production* in itself leads to error. So long as the most urgent needs of a large part of society are not satisfied, or *only* the most immediate needs are satisfied, there can of course be absolutely no talk of *over-production of products*—in the sense that the amount of products is excessive in relation to the need for them.... But over-production of products and over-production of *commodities* are two entirely different things!!!" Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value II* (Moscow, 1968), p. 527.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Intellectual waste production testifies to the domination of exchange value. The exigencies of accumulation stake out new fields for the production and consumption of waste. Planned obsolescence, once the ribbon on the package, is now the linchpin for the reproduction of society. Only with the logic of exchange value is it 'cheaper' to junk tens of millions of glass bottles so as to produce more rather than to reuse them. The 'no deposit—no return' bottles are the pattern for intellectual production in the age of monopoly capital. The life of the commodity is shortened so as to lengthen the life of capitalism. Intellectual planned obsolescence annihilates memory and history so as to spur stagnating demand and production. The result is memoryless repetition—a social amnesia.[19] Nowadays everything looks, reads, smells more and more the same because everything is.

That the academic commandment of survival and success exactly parallels the capitalist suggests the inroads of the falling rate of intelligence: 'publish or perish' is more than a translation of 'accumulate or perish.' It is the language of capitalism as spoken by a new sector, the academic sector. In this sector, as elsewhere, the interruption of accumulation defines a crisis. For the academic the failure to accumulate can mean loss of job, that is, bankruptcy and crisis—financial and otherwise. This has consequences, of course, both for the form and content of intellectual production; it is generally geared to fit the requirements of the big consumers—government, military, industry. Even the trappings of academic thought distant from the immediate needs of monopoly capital take on the features of the commodity. Marxism not excepted, news schools, innovations, advances, breakthroughs, are announced like new brands. Everyone is out to corner a piece of the market. Interlocking directorates, intellectual holding companies and trusts leave tracks in footnotes of gratuitous commendations, dedications and recommendations. The transition from competitive to monopoly capital has brought in its wake intellectual kick-backs, as well as volume sales and cut-rate goods.

Some of these processes have been recorded within the field of sociology. John Helmer has noted that "sociologists produce paper," calculating that their average productivity is "one journal article every three years or about 7.5 words a day." "... It is quantity that counts. Indeed, the only way sociologists have been able to measure the quality of their output is to estimate the amount of notice other sociologists give to production by citing individual authors and their papers in their own. It turns out that the number of citations an individual sociologist gets—the measure of his quality—is highly correlative with the size of his output. The more he publishes, the more he is noticed." "The rate of obsolescence is so fast that for most producers the best way to deal with it is to produce at an even faster rate, rather than to gamble on a masterpiece."[20] Moreover there is a relation between productivity and economic power—control over foundations, journals, 'top' schools, etc. The concentration of economic power in the 'free' market of ideas dictates that only the well capitalized can enter the market with a completely new product and expect success. This affects the internal structure of ideas; it has been observed that there seems to be a certain affinity between 'grand' theories and big universities.[21]

19. See my *Social Amnesia: A Critique of Conformist Psychology from Adler to Laing* (Boston, 1975).

20. John Helmer, *The Deadly Simple Mechanics of Society* (New York, 1974), pp. 7-8, p. 56. See also the penetrating article by Thomas Ferguson which is concerned with the philosophy of science: "The Political Economy of Knowledge," *Telos* 15 (Spring 1973). "Science is now a *commodity*...a victim of the craving for money, for profits, and for power; the object of pork-barrel politics, and skulduggery..." (p. 125).

21. See Alvin Gouldner's remarks on the relationship between Harvard and Parsons: *The*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The media and the theory of the media express the same movement of capital; as the rate of intelligence falls, the media quantitatively expands. "Stations and channels derive their profitability, and therefore their value, from the size of their potential audiences."[22] The relative contraction of human labor in media production corresponds to its routinization; technical 'know-how' substitutes for content. It is not without interest that many historians and critics of the media—comics, radio, newspapers, photography—characterize the beginning and early periods as marked by creativity and spontaneity. If this is true, it may be due both to the competitive structure of these industries prior to concentration and centralization, and the low organic composition of man.[23] These change in late capitalism; constant capital displaces living labor and intelligence. Mass reproduction, to reverse a Benjamin formulation, promotes the reproduction of the masses.[24] Both are internally connected, as is recreation and the re-creation of labor power.

It can be hypothesized that the critique and theory of the media has followed this same path; that is, it flowered during earlier stages of the mass media and has tended over time to turn apologetic or to specialize. Enzensberger noted in 1962 that "while radio, cinema, television...are being keenly discussed, each on its own terms, the mind industry taken as a whole, is disregarded."[25] The theory of mass culture might be a case in point. In a very inadequate and often aristocratic form it assailed the commodification of thought.[26] The theory was bandied around extensively, probably 'peaking' in the 1950s. Today it sounds awkward and is in eclipse. This is not because it has been transcended by more adequate theories; rather the reverse. The mass media is no longer experienced as an alien separate commodity, and is now, in one form or another, embraced. The dominion of the mass media has been extended, and everything exists within it. McLuhan's writings recapitulate this regression. His 1951 *Mechanical Bride* was a trenchant and radical critique of the media. His later writings are apologetics and celebrations.[27] Or more recently, some of the oldest shibboleths to explain away the irrationality and waste of capitalism—pluralism and consumer choice—have been offered as a new theory to justify the administered diversity of mass culture.[28]

Coming Crisis of Western Sociology (New York, 1971), pp. 172ff.

22. H. Schiller, *Mass Communications and the American Empire* (Boston, 1971), p. 147.

23. The story is obviously different and more complex in regard to each sector of the media; these thoughts only intend to be suggestive.

24. W. Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," *Illuminations* (New York, 1969), p. 6.

25. H.M. Enzensberger, "Industrialization of the Mind," in *The Consciousness Industry* (New York, 1974), p. 6.

26. For a historical survey, see Leo Lowenthal, *Literature, Popular Culture and Society* (Prentice-Hall, 1961). For a discussion of the elitist presuppositions of the notion of mass society see Leon Bramson, *The Political Context of Sociology* (Princeton, 1967).

27. On McLuhan, see John Fekete, "McLuhanacy: Counterrevolution in Cultural Theory," *Telos* 15 (Spring 1973), pp. 75ff. Fekete, I think, overemphasizes the continuity between the earlier and later McLuhan.

28. See Herbert Gans, *Popular Culture and High Culture* (New York, 1974). This book is a veritable gold mine of stale theories and banal musings passing itself off as fresh insights. Not the least of its problems is its sheer ignorance of the critiques of mass culture it is supposedly refuting. Gans ascribes the pessimism of mass culture critiques to the fact that its theorists were downwardly mobile and losing their influence (pp. 55-56): so for a pinch of sociology of knowledge. His book deals in only the most casual way with such questions as violence in the media or its economic concentration. About the former he forgets to mention wars and the military but citing Daniel Bell's twenty year old study tells us that crime has decreased in the U.S. About the latter he has nothing to say. His general point is that in the media, as with General Motor's offerings,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If the mass media itself is perceived differently in developed capitalism, this suggests another, and perhaps decisive, dimension of the organic composition of man: the historical structure and quality of experience. The increasing decomposition of subjectivity is accompanied by the intensifying reification of experience. Experience does not float above and outside society; rather it is a social category subjected to the same forces that constitute capitalism. The falling rate of intelligence is grounded in the increasing homogenization of experience, or what Benjamin called "the increasing atrophy of experience."[29] Experience decays not simply because it is prepackaged and manufactured, but because its living basis, the individual, hardens. What was denigrated at the beginning of the bourgeois era as secondary qualities—not primary and quantitative—disintegrates at the end. Intelligence falls as experience reifies.

There was no falling rate of profit for the proletariat; it directly affected only the bourgeoisie. Yet the same pressures that made up the law informed the proletariat, e.g., the increasing replacement of variable by constant capital, the rate of exploitation, etc. Can one posit a falling rate of intelligence for a society as a whole, for both a proletariat and a bourgeoisie? Or is the proletariat immune? Inasmuch as the organic composition of man is a social relation not unique to the bourgeoisie, the falling rate of intelligence as a form of consciousness puts into question the nature of class consciousness. What needs examination are the forms of "secondary" exploitation that cannot be measured by surplus value and which affect "the consciousness, wishes, hopes and conceptions" of working men and women.[30]

As with the falling rate of profit both a methodological and substantial issue moves to the fore: to the point the falling rate of profit tendency is "latent"—not expressed because of a counter-tendency—which is the tendency and which is the counter-tendency? The problem of class consciousness and the falling rate of intelligence provoke similar questions. To the point that class consciousness is latent, is there a more powerful tendency towards class *un*consciousness? The absence of class consciousness cannot be explained simply by recourse to itself, e.g., false consciousness; it calls for an objective theory.[31] *History and Class Consciousness* must be set against the history of class unconsciousness.

---

there are enough different models to keep everyone happy and prove the existence of freedom. According to Gans' sterling reasoning if there is a uniform political content to the media, this is beside the point: "While it is correct to argue that all culture is political, that argument is politically relevant only for people for whom politics is of major importance, for the rest of the population is not likely to care..." (p. 108).

29. W. Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire* (London, 1973), p. 113.

30. See Oskar Negt, Alexander Kuge, *Oeffentlichkeit und Erfahrung* (Frankfurt, 1972), pp. 299ff.

31. For some other remarks, see my "Politics of the Crisis Theory," *Telos* 23 (Spring 1975), p. 49.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Unionization in America

by John Zerzan

Throughout the Left there is a wrong impression of the labor struggles of the Depression, which obscures our understanding of the nature and origin of the increasingly anti-union 'revolt against work' of today. Trade unions in the 1920's were generally in a weak and worsening position. While union membership constituted 19.4% of non-agricultural workers in 1920, only 10.2% were organized by 1930. The employee representation plans, or company unions, of "welfare capitalism" were being instituted as substitutes for unionism, in an effort at stabilized, peaceful industrial relations.

There were some, however, who even before the Crash realized that independent unions were essential for effective labor-management cooperation. In 1925, for example, Arthur Nash of the Golden Rule Clothing Company invited Sidney Hillman's Amalgamated Clothing Workers to organize his employees. Mr. Nash explained it this way: "I had a job that I could not do, and I just passed the buck to Mr. Hillman." Gerard P. Swope, president of General Electric, tried as early as 1926 to persuade the AFL to organize a nation-wide union of electrical workers on an industrial basis. Swope believed that having an industrial union might well mean "the difference between an organization with which we could work on a business-like basis and one that would be a source of endless difficulties." In 1928 George Mead wrote "Why I Unionized My Plant," describing in glowing terms his bringing the papermakers' union to his Wisconsin employees. Also in 1928, Secretary of Labor Davis asked that year's AFL convention to eliminate jurisdictional squabbling and get on with the kind of mass organizing that business desired. Another example of the pacifying, stabilizing possibilities of unionization followed the spontaneous strike movement of Southern textile workers in 1929. Commenting on AFL efforts to organize the union-less and uncontrolled mill workers, the *Chicago Tribune* in early 1930 expressed its support: "The effort of the Federation to organize the mill workers of the South deserves the endorsement of far-seeing businessmen throughout the country."

But with the onset of the Depression, the weakness of the AFL and its craft union approach became even more obvious. With the trend toward fewer skilled workers, the Federation's attempts to sell itself to industry as a frankly peace-keeping institution were increasingly out of touch with its capabilities. The Crash, moreover, did not awaken the craft union leaders to a new awareness of the changing industrial order. Noted businessman Edward Louis Sullivan classified the AFL as simply "reactionary."

In the early 1930's, some labor leaders became involved with a group of far-sighted businessmen who saw the need for mass unionization. John L. Lewis and Sidney Hillman, destined to play major roles in the formulation of the National Recovery Act of 1933 and the formation of the CIO, came to realize by 1932 that government and business might be enlisted in the cause of industrial unionism. Gerard Swope, the above-mentioned president of GE, unveiled his Swope Plan in 1931 with the help of employers like Chamber of Commerce President Henry I. Harriman. Self-government in industry, via extended trade associations which would operate outside anti-trust laws, was the basis of the plan. An essential facet was to be the unionization of the basic industries, with unions possessing the same kind of disciplinary power over the workers as the trade associations would exercise over individual firms.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In their enthusiasm for a controlled, rationalized corporate system, these labor and business leaders were as one. "Lewis and Hillman, in the end, differed little from Gerard Swope and Henry I. Harriman," in the words of Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. President Hoover labeled these plans "sheer fascism." By 1932, in fact, the government stood committed to labor's right to organize. Pre-dating the NRA by a year, the Norris-Laguardia Act not only outlawed the "yellow-dog" contract and certain kinds of injunctions but fully sanctioned the right to collective bargaining.

Section 7a of the NRA became the focus of attention after its enactment in June, 1933, however, and the reason seems two-fold. The guarantee in 7a of labor's right to collective bargaining had the weight of a strong resurgence of labor unrest in 1933, as compared to the relative quiescence of 1932. Fully 812,000 workers struck in 1933, whereas only 243,000 had struck in 1932.

The second reason for the utilization of Section 7a was that it was part of a whole stabilization program, which embodied the Swope Plan-type thinking on the need for a near-cartellization of business and the curtailment of much competition. Swope, not surprisingly, was one of the NRA's main architects—along with John L. Lewis.

With the NRA, the full integration of labor into the business system came a step closer to fruition. In the context of a continuing depression and increasing worker hostility, the need for industrial unionism became more and more apparent to government leaders. Donald Richberg, an author of both Norris-LaGuardia and NRA, decried craft unionism's failure to organize more than a small minority, and saw industrial unions as the key to industrial stability. As labor writer Benjamin Stolberg put it, in his "A Government in Search of a Labor Movement," "The old-fashioned craft leader is through, for he is helpless to express the increasing restlessness of American labor." And Stolberg knew that President Roosevelt saw the need for unions, in order to safely contain that restlessness: "NRA was wholly an administrative measure.... It shows that Mr. Roosevelt believes that what American industry needs desperately is the recognition and extension of the trade union movement."

Concerning FDR, there is ample evidence that Stolberg is correct and that Roosevelt consistently held to a basic belief in collective bargaining. As Assistant Secretary of the Navy, he sat on the Executive Board of the National Civic Federation, that early and important organization of heads of business and labor formed to promote amity through contracts and close communications. As Governor of New York, Roosevelt had been impressed by Swope's arguments and "had talked to John Sullivan of the State Federation of Labor in New York about the possibility of unions being organized in plants like General Electric," according to Frances Perkins.

Perkins, FDR's Secretary of Labor, recounted the President's advice to a group of businessmen: "You don't need to be afraid about unions.... You shouldn't be afraid to have them organize in your factory. They don't want to run the business. You will probably get a lot better production and a lot more peace and happiness if you have a good union organization and a good contract."

It was not surprising that Roosevelt's choice to head the NRA, Gen. Hugh Johnson, "appreciates that industry cannot function without organized labor," in the judgment of Stolberg. Nor is the opinion of *Fortune*, that most prestigious of big business periodicals, surprising as regards the NRA as vehicle for unionization. In December, 1933 *Fortune* implied disapproval of the Ford Motor Company as being "ruled primarily by fear," while noting that firms unionized under NRA's 7a have the joint strength of both NRA and union officials to limit strikes. The phoney, staged strike became a safer bet at this time, owing to the NRA presence. In August 1933, for example, the ILGWU staged a strike of New York dressmakers, carefully arranged by

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

union and NRA officials to last exactly 4 days and bring the unorganized dressmakers into the union and under an NRA code.

Where the AFL did not attempt stage-managed strikes, it worked to defeat legitimate walk-outs. Louis Adamic concluded that "The Federation as a whole...sabotaged or suppressed all important rank-and-file or spontaneous movements in 1933 and 1943, especially those in steel and rubber. The one exception was the Bridges movement on the coast." It is far from clear, however, that even one exception occurred.

Under the leadership of Harry Bridges, the organizing of West Coast longshoremen had culminated in the famous San Francisco general strike of July, 1934. Charles Larreine, the maritime labor historian, concludes that the only "benefit" obtained by the workers was their being brought under union contract: "The terms under which the prolonged, violent strike was settled were similar, to be sure, to some of the proposals for settlement made before the strike began. Looked at in this perspective it might seem that the strike served no purpose. But looked at in the larger context of collective bargaining, the strike was both unavoidable and necessary."

The settlement of the 1934 strike marked the beginning of a change in consciousness for San Francisco employers; though waterfront strife continued sporadically until 1937, the employers had begun to see that all that union officialdom really wanted was the closed shop, with the dues and power over the membership it entails. And for this, union discipline could then be put to the service of guaranteeing an absence of trouble from the longshoremen. Roosevelt, as indicated above, learned this lesson rather earlier; his Secretary of Labor, noting the lack of White House alarm over the SF general strike, commented on the power of union officials over union members: "Sensible labor leaders advised [sic] the men to get back to work, that this was no time for an unconsidered sympathetic strike, even if it was also in their own interest."

Fortune viewed Bridges as one of the "gifted, temperamental, power-wielding leaders of American maritime labor without whose compliance no decrees of the Maritime commission are likely to keep the peace." The pro-Bridges article praised him and other labor leaders for their introduction of stable, regularized labor relations to shipping and other industries.

San Francisco employers had come, by 1937, to fully appreciate the necessity of unionization as the key to a dependable work force. Irving Bernstein, in his authoritative history of Depression labor, tells us that in 1937 "the town's leading businessmen formed the Committee of Forty-Three, hoping to persuade the unions to join in a program to stabilize labor relations. The labor people declined." The union chiefs declined, it should be added, because they feared membership reaction to institutionalized labor-management collusion of this kind. Bernstein continues: "But the Committee served a purpose—to commit San Francisco's employers to collective bargaining. And it was those with experience with Bridges and the ILWU, notably the two leading owners of steamship lines, Roger Lapham and Almon Roth, who led the way, forming the SF Employers council which had as its purpose "the recognition and exercise of the right of the employers to bargain collectively."

Given the effective control over workers that only unions can manage, it was not at all out of place that San Francisco employers should have strived for collective bargaining, nor that the promotion and coordination of contracts quickly spread up and down the Pacific Coast.

Meanwhile 1934 and 1935 saw a deepening trend toward labor militancy and violence. The bloody Electric Auto-Lite strike in Toledo and the street warfare of the striking Minneapolis truck drivers were among the most spectacular of 1934, a year in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which 40 strikers were killed. In less than eighteen months, between the summer of 1933 and the winter of 1934, troops were called out in sixteen states. The important point is that the AFL could not control this activism; though it might stall and sell out the workers, it could not provide the kind of organization that could enroll all of a firm's workers into a single, industry-wide union and bring peace under collective bargaining. Workers resisted the conservative craft form of organization and the constant jurisdictional bickering that accompanied it and began to experiment with new organizational forms. For example, union locals in Hudson and Oldsmobile plants seceded from the AFL in August, 1934, to elect representatives from their own ranks and negotiate democratically. The *Wall Street Journal* discussed speculation as to the radicalism of the independents for several days, in articles such as "More on the Secession," and "Disaffection Spreads." Labor partisan Art Preis provides some revealing figures: "By 1935, the membership of the AFL federal auto locals had dwindled from 100,000 to 20,000. When the Wolman Board of the NRA took a poll in 1935 to determine 'proportional representation' in a number of plants in Michigan, of the 163,150 votes cast, 88.7% were for unaffiliated representatives; 8.6% for leaders of AFL federal locals."

If the NRA and its Section 7a was intended to fix labor "into a semi-public unionism whose organization was part of a government plan," in Stolberg's words, Washington in 1935 yet hoped to make good on the 1933 beginning. From the point of view of industrial peace, the impetus, as we have seen, was certainly stronger by 1935, when the Wagner bill was being considered. Supporters of the measure, like Lloyd Garrison and Harry Millis, put forth the "safety measure" theory, arguing the importance of assisting unionism and protraying the state as friend of the worker, in order to combat worker radicalism. Leon Keyserling, legislative assistant to Senator Wagner, feared an uncontrolled labor movement, and saw a goal of government-sponsored labor relations which could reduce conflict and induce labor and business to work together in concert with government.

The pressing need for a government guarantee to unionism was readily appreciated and the Wagner bill breezed through the Senate in May by a 62-11 margin. Nonetheless, all of the standard accounts continue to assert business' steadfast opposition to the bill in spite of the evidence. The eminent business historian Thomas Cochran, for example, re-affirms the old thesis, only to admit that "the struggle in Congress appears very mild...All of this is hard to explain."

By this time, of course, leading elements of business and government saw collective bargaining as imperative for the steadying of the industrial order. Secretary Perkins is worth quoting at some length: "It may be surprising to some people to realize that men looked upon as the conservative branch of the Roosevelt administration were cooperative in bringing about a new, more modern and more reasonable attitude on the part of employers toward collective bargaining agreements. Averell Harriman of the Union Pacific Railroad, Carl Gray of the same railroad, Daniel Willard of the Baltimore and Ohio, Walter Teagle of the Standard Oil Company, Thomas Lamont of J.P. Morgan and Company, Myron Taylor of U.S. Steel, Gerard Swope of General Electric, and Robert Armory, a textile manufacturer, were among those whom I asked for help from time to time in difficult situations, where the problem was to start collective bargaining negotiations. Roosevelt knew that these people had helped and was always very grateful to them." Nor was this "more reasonable attitude" merely a privately expressed one. Of many instances which could be cited, is the speech of Henry Heimann, head of the National Association of Credit Men (*Wall Street Journal*,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

August 21, 1934), which called for the abandonment of the company union idea and the control of labor in strong, national bodies.

By the time of the 1935 AFL Convention, the stage was set: workers in auto, rubber, radio, textiles, and steel were furious over the inaction, bad faith, and collusion with management that they saw in the AFL. The vast majority of General Motors workers, for example, regarded continued membership in an AFL auto local as proof of being a paid agent of GM, according to Wyndham Mortimer. Craft-style unionism stood in dire need of replacement by newer forms if unions were to contain the nation's workers.

John L. Lewis, the conservative and ruthless head of the United Mine Workers, was to lead the move toward industrial unionism. A Republican up to and during the 1932 presidential campaign, he ruled the often resistant miners by dictatorial methods. The servility and corruption of the union began constant revolts from the ranks against Lewis. A miner interviewed by Studs Terkel testified to this state of affairs when he spoke of a UMW field representative being tarred and feathered "for tryin' to edge in with management," and declared that the "chairman of the local was thick with the superintendent of the mine." In October, 1933 *Fortune* related the miners' hatred of Lewis during the 1920's and the "Lewis Must Go" campaign of 1932. Generally quite pro-Lewis, "his repressive tactics in the union" were mentioned, and the article concluded with the judgement that the prospect of organizing 30,000,000 workers did not frighten Lewis—nor, by very strong implication, should it frighten business.

With Lewis' famous—and no doubt calculated—punch to the jaw of Bill Hutcheson, boss of the Carpenters Union and a major craft unionism spokesman, a split from the AFL was signalled. The blow, at the 1935 AFL Convention, enabled Lewis to represent himself to the bitter and distrustful industrial workers as a new kind of leader. "By attacking Hutcheson, he was attacking the trade unionism these workers so bitterly hated...Hutcheson symbolized to millions of frustrated workers that craft-unionism policy that had defeated their spontaneous organizations," in the words of Saul Alinsky.

Within a month of the October convention, the committee for industrial Organization was formed by Lewis and a few others in the Federation who headed industrial-type unions. By early 1937, locals of those unions affiliated with the new CIO were expelled from all city and state AFL councils, making the break final and official.

The CIO began with a feudal structure in which all officers were appointed by Lewis, giving it an important advantage over its AFL predecessors. Whereas the AFL officials needed decades to emasculate the fairly autonomous city and state central councils and establish centralized national power, the CIO chiefs established complete control over collective bargaining and strike sanction almost from the outset. Leaders of both the AFL and CIO were "agreed on the necessity for circumscribing the increasing militancy in the basic industries...No one in the AFL or in the CIO was under any illusions that Lewis, Murray, Hillman, and Dubinsky were out to build a radically new kind of movement," as Sidney Lens put it.

The presence of Communists and other leftists within the CIO does not alter the picture, and not a few business leaders understood the anti-radical character of the new organization. For example, "when the CIO was organized and the left-led United Electrical Workers began to organize GE, Gerard Swope rejoiced," noted Ronald Radosh. Swope, the NRA architect, informed one of his GE vice-presidents that "if you can't get along with these fellows and settle matters, there's something wrong with you." The UAW was praised by Swope as "well-led, the discipline good." Radosh, in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fact, concludes that "it was the more politically radical unions that led the integration of labor into the corporate structure."

Worker action continued to develop, however, in the relative absence of unions throughout 1935 and 1936. New forms of struggle and organization were adopted which deeply frightened business, government, and union superiors alike. Employee-run independent unions sprang up, often employing radical tactics which challenged the traditional rights of management to define the nature of the job. The "skippy," for instance, was a very effective form of defiance that was spontaneously adopted by the man on the assembly line. Workers might quietly agree to skip every fifth fender or leave untightened every sixth bolt to protest intolerable job conditions. Rapidly the line would come to a halt in complete confusion, with enraged but helpless foremen at a loss to single out the participants.

The most threatening device and the one to become very widely utilized was, of course, the sitdown strike. Like the skippy it more often than not was employed by the "unorganized;" in fact, the sitdown reflects worker suspicion of union structure and control. As Louis Adamic put it so well: "Most workers distrust—if not consciously, then unconsciously—union officials and strike leaders and committees, even when they have elected them themselves. The beauty of the sitdown or stay-in is that there are no leaders or officials to distrust. There can be no sell-out. Such standard procedure as strike sanction is hopelessly obsolete when workers drop their tools, stop their machines, and sit down beside them. The initiative, conduct, and control come directly from the men involved."

The sitdown seems to have first become an established tactic in the rubber factories of Akron. Between 1933 and 1936 it became a tradition in Akron, developed largely because the union had failed to resist the speed-up.

The speed-up appears to have been the chief single cause of discontent throughout mass production. A 1934 study of the auto industry revealed that the grievance "mentioned most frequently. . . and upper-most in the minds of those who testified is the speed-up." Tactics like the sitdown were taken up when workers felt they had to challenge the employer's absolute right to control the work process, in the absence of union interest in questioning management prerogatives. The challenge to the speed-up came not only out of the sheer fatigue felt over the absolute rate of production, then, but also because the production worker was not free to set the pace of his work and to determine the manner in which it was to be performed. In the factories was joined the battle over who was to control the workers's life on the job. This was the real issue; as Mary Vorse put it, "the auto workers' discontent came in about equal parts from the speed-up and the absolute autocracy of the industry."

The struggle was waged not only by the auto workers, of course, but it was GM workers who waged one of the most important fights. And the role of the union as conservator of the existing relationships, rather than as challenger of them, may be clearly seen in the context of the great GM sitdown strike.

Actually the sitdown movement that was beginning to spread rapidly by late 1936 was anything but a part of CIO tactics. It "sprang spontaneously from an angered mass of workers. All American labor leaders would have been shocked, scared and instinctively opposed to the initiation or approval of this disorderly revolutionary upheaval," according to Saul Alinsky.

The 44-day GM sitdown began on December 28, 1936, when some 7,000 at Cleveland's Fisher plant struck. Two days later workers in Fisher Body No. 2 in Flint sat down and the spontaneous movement quickly spread throughout the GM system, bringing it to a standstill.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The former Harvard economist J. Raymond Walsh stated flatly that the CIO had certainly not called the strike: "The CIO high command. . . tried in vain to prevent the strike." As Wellington Roe wrote: "To the public, at least, Lewis was its originator. Actually Lewis had no more to do with the sit-down strike than some native of Patagonia." Although, as James Wechsler, Lewis' biographer, recorded, "he gave a superb imitation of a man who had worked everything out in advance."

Again, it was the lack of control over the assembly line that produced the sitdown among auto workers. Henry Kraus's book on the GM strike expressed it this way: "It was the speed-up that organized Flint, as it was the one element in the life of all the workers that found a common basis of resentment."

Though union officialdom feared the undisciplined sitdown movement, Lewis and the CIO realized that they must move fast if they hoped to keep up with and establish control over it. Here Lewis declared on December 31, very early in the strike, that "the CIO stands squarely behind these sitdowns."

This tactic was essential at the time, though approval of sitdowns was revoked just as soon as the CIO could get away with it. Len DeCaux, editor of the CIO's Union News Service, stated that "as a matter of fact, the first experience of the CIO with sitdowns was in discouraging them."

When the GM strike began, very few employees belonged to the CIO-affiliated United Auto Workers; in Flint only one in 400 belonged to the UAW. It was not, apparently, an easy matter for the CIO to achieve control over the strike. Kraus's account contains several instances of the difficulties encountered, including "the strike committee had not yet completely established its authority and there were accordingly some resistance and friction at first with a certain tendency to anarchy of action." Wyndham Mortimer, another very pro-union source, admitted that "a very disturbing factor on the union side was that several members of our negotiating committee were convinced that no one in the leadership could be trusted, from John L. Lewis down."

Before centralized authority was effected, many radical possibilities remained open. Sidney Fine's authoritative *Sitdown* recognized the sitdowners' resistance to hierarchical procedures, commenting on the "fierce independence" displayed by the workers. The situation prompted Thomas Brooks to assay that "for a brief time, the CIO teetered on the brink of the revolutionary industrial unionism of the Wobblies." Alinsky states similarly that "the General Motors strike bordered on revolution."

The sitdowns in rubber, which had occurred, from Louis Adamic's observations, "without encouragement from any rank-and-file organizer," much less from any union, and which were almost invariably successful, reached a very important climax at GM. And inasmuch as the GM sitdowners were so vitally concerned with controlling the assembly line as the key issue, basic antagonism between workers and union was implied from the start. The CIO had to attach itself to the sitdown phenomenon and, at least initially, make a show of supporting the workers' actions, but there existed a vast chasm between the attitudes of that movement and the respect for management's rights of the CIO.

CIO leaders tried from the beginning to find a way to squelch the occupation of GM property. In a revealing passage, Secretary of Labor Perkins tells us: "The CIO came to support the automobile workers, although I know for a fact that John Lewis and Sidney Hillman and Lee Pressmen, CIO counsel, made great efforts to get the men to leave the plant... But they would not publicly desert them."

CIO officials had no interest in taking up the issue of speed-up. Regulation of the speed of the line was listed as eighth of eight demands submitted by the UAW to GM on January 4. Predictably, the February 11 settlement dealt almost exclusively with

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

union recognition and not at all with speed-up. The union had been granted sole-bargaining-agent status for six months in the 17 struck plants and looked forward to consolidating its position in the enforced absence of any rivals.

When Bud Simons, head of the strike committee in Fisher Body No. 1, was awakened and told the terms of the settlement, he said, "That won't do for the men to hear. That's not what we've been striking for." And when the union presented the settlement to the strikers, distrust mounted in relation to the unanswered questions as to speed of the line, authority on the shop floor, and working conditions.

The workers' forebodings were borne out by the negotiations which followed the evacuation of the plants. GM's policy was "above all, to preserve managerial discretion in the productive process, particularly over the speed of the line." The fundamental demand of the strike—to the strikers—had been "mutual determination" of the speed of production, but under the contract signed March 12 local management was ensured "full authority" in these matters. Alfred P. Sloan Jr., GM president, became satisfied that the union was not out to challenge management's rights, and reported "we have retained all the basic powers to manage."

In addition, the union became the effective agency for suppressing workers' direct action against speed-up or other grievances, pleging that "there shall be no suspensions or stoppages of work until every effort has been exhausted to adjust them through the regular grievance procedure, and in no case without the approval of the international officers of the union."

Workers were plainly dissatisfied with the outcome of their sitdown, a fact usually ignored in the many accounts of the 'victorious CIO breakthrough' of the GM occupation. William Knudsen, GM vice-president, said that there were 170 sitdowns in GM plants between March and June, 1937, as workers who had become conscious of their great power did not automatically submit to union-management hegemony. Union officials scurried from place to place to quell these stoppages, which they considered a very serious threat to union authority. A *New York Times* article called "Unauthorized Sit-Downs Fought by C.I.O. Unions," described the drastic efforts used to end the sitdowns, including the dismissal of any union representative sympathetic to them. The same April 12, 1937 article ascribed the sitdowns to "dissatisfaction on the part of the workers with the union itself," and reported that "they are as willing in some cases to defy their own leaders as their bosses."

Interestingly, the Communists were just as concerned with restoring proper order via traditional union structures as anyone else in the CIO. Even Eugene Lyons' hysterical *The Red Decade*, which found almost everything in the 1930s to be party-controlled, did not try to say that the sitdown movement was Red-inspired or dominated.

A sitdown wave moved with amazing rapidity to all types of industry and business in the spring of 1937. *New Masses* of May 4 noted that "the strikes of the Woolworth and Grant girls gave a stunning surprise both to their employers and to the working-class movement." Evelyn Finn, a seamstress interviewed by Studs Terkel, told of the sitdown she was involved in: "The boss was goin' crazy. The union officials came down. They went crazy, too. It was a hilarious day."

The ending of the movement could be effectively and lastingly engineered only from the inside. Before business and government could formulate a solution the union leaders themselves had put the lid on sitdowns. An industrial relations expert on the subject: "The sitdown is too easy a tactic for good discipline... because workers can secure grievance settlement by interrupting production through a sitdown, they may

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

eventually think, what's the use of joining a union and paying dues if we can get what we want this way?"

The sitdowns were ended with the unions cooperating with management in the ouster of the workers, for of course the CIO had no intention of helping employees take power over their own jobs. As CIO official Mike Widman put it, "My union experience taught me that the direction of the working force is vested in management. The union shall not abridge that right, so long as there is no discrimination or unfairness."

Walter Lippmann, in the spring of 1937, warned recalcitrant businessmen "that the more they treat Mr. Lewis and the CIO as public enemies to be resisted at all costs, the more impossible they make it for Mr. Lewis to develop discipline and a sense of responsibility in the ranks..." By this time, however, many more employers were peacefully signed up with the CIO.

In March (1937), after three months of secret negotiations, US Steel's Myron Taylor signed a recognition agreement with Lewis, typifying the many industrialists impressed with CIO usefulness. The *New York World-Telegram* reported that "two financiers closely identified with Morgan interests said they had only praise and admiration for Mr. Lewis... apparently thoroughly in accord on the main theme that complete industrial organization was inevitable, they hinted that other industrial leaders may be just as receptive to unionization of their plants as is Myron C. Taylor, chief of Big Steel."

The critical CIO role in quelling or preventing sitdowns was certainly not lost on employers. In the steel industry, the CIO's Steel Workers' Organizing Committee found many willing customers, due to management's inability to control its employees unassisted. Charles Haines, producer of steel-making equipment and a member of one of the pioneering steel families of America, was representative of this management awareness. Stability was desired and hence the employers "were asking the SWOC to straighten out their labor difficulties," in Mary Vorse's words.

The bloody "Little Steel" strike was clearly an exception to the quickening trend of the employer acceptance of unionism. Concerning the Little Steel strike, by the way, the CIO could have been successful, at least could have avoided the score of dead, had it not been so opposed to the use of the sitdown. Labor commentators Preis, Levinson, Lens, and others agree that the killing of pickets and demonstrators would have been obviated by the use of the sitdown tactic. And more than one writer has wondered if the whole "Memorial Day Massacre" march of unarmed strikers—and the likelihood of their being shot—was not planned by union leaders to produce union martyrs.

A contract with SWOC was a safeguard against work actions, and employers were appreciative. For example: "Major officials of the U.S. Steel Company have repeatedly and publicly attested the satisfactory character of their contractual relations with the unions," reported Robert Brooks. John L. Lewis was to the point when he said in 1937, "A CIO contract is adequate protection against sitdowns, liedowns, or any other kind of strike."

Professor of labor relations Benjamin Selekman observed that "union leaders have sought to calm down the new members with their seemingly insatiable demands." Likewise, Carroll Dougherty judged that "The induction of large numbers of raw recruits untrained in unionism made guidance from the top necessary," adding, almost as an afterthought, "yet there was danger that such guidance would develop into permanent dictatorship."

It did not prove easy for the unions to impose discipline on the many new members.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

As we have seen, their "seemingly insatiable demands" were never uppermost in the minds of the union leaders; labor leaders must appear to support worker demands, if they are to initially interest them in union representation. "Only later does the union seek to instruct the individual member in his responsibilities, and such education is a slow process... Individual members must come to realize that they cannot take matters into their own hands," wrote John Dunlop.

Exclusive-bargaining-agent status, or the closed shop, is the primary institution by which the union enforces control of the workers. Golden and Ruttenberg, two SWOC officials, candidly argue in *The Dynamics of Industrial Democracy* that unions need power and responsibility to maintain discipline. With the closed shop, the union acquires, in effect, the power to fire unruly members; if a member is dropped from the union, he is dropped from his job. Golden and Ruttenberg, as so many other union spokesmen, point out that the union is likely to make noise until it gains the closed shop arrangement, and that management rapidly comes to see the need for a strong (closed shop) union, in the interest of a contained work force. The price of cooperation is thus the closed shop, and it satisfies both union and management.

By 1938, according to Brooks, only a "small minority" of employers opposed collective bargaining as guaranteed by the Wagner Act. It becomes easy to see why. Union leaders were "anxious to demonstrate to the management their responsibility, and their willingness to accept the burden of 'selling' the contract to the rank-and-file and keeping the dissidents in line," according to consultants Sayles and Straus. In many cases, unions simply replaced personnel departments.

As business came increasingly to the awareness of unions as indispensable to the maintenance of a relatively stable and docile labor supply, the ranks of labor exhibited more and more dissatisfaction with "their" new organizations. The 1945 *Trends in Collective Bargaining* study noted that "by around 1940" the labor leader had joined the business leader as an object of "widespread cynicism" to the American worker. Similarly, Daugherty reported that workers were chafing under the lack of structural democracy in the unions: "There was evidence, by the end of 1940, that the rank and file were growing restive under such conditions."

Workers, after some initial enthusiasm and hopefulness regarding the CIO, were starting to feel the "closed system" nature of compulsory unions. In discussing union-management cooperation in the steel industry, CIO officials Golden and Ruttenberg admitted, for example, that "to some workers" the cooperation only added up in practice to "a vicious speed-up."

Thus we return to the issue uppermost in the minds of industrial workers in the 1930s struggles. And Richard Lester seems to be quite correct in concluding that "the industrial government jointly established" possesses "disciplinary arrangements advantageous to management, rendering worker rebellions more and more difficult."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Struggle of Reason Against Total Bureaucratization*

by Franco Ferrarotti

A Reference Point

In July 1973, at the age of 78, Max Horkheimer passed away in the Swiss town of Montagnola. If not the founder, he was at least the most important director of the Institute of Social Research at the University of Frankfurt, from which the famous name "Frankfurt School" is derived. Actually, if we can believe Habermas, who began his academic career as Adorno's assistant, there was never a Frankfurt "school" in the strict sense of the word, except of course in its first year in exile from Germany after the escape from Nazism. At any rate, Horkheimer, more than Adorno and with greater incisiveness than Marcuse and Fromm, represents a basic point of reference for an intellectual climate that has had, despite obvious limitations, a crucial influence on both Marxist and non-Marxist thought. More rigorous than Adorno, and more open to economic and practical reality than Marcuse, the cautious Horkheimer was throughout the secure point of reference—especially after his return to Frankfurt.

Yet, his "critical theory of society" never went further than its first great expression on the theme of authority and the family.[1] All the basic elements of "critical theory," including its ambiguity, are already present in the theoretical introduction to Horkheimer's essay "Authority and the Family:" the centrality of the concept of authority; the family as the privileged sphere for the social reproduction of consensus; the human acceptance of the harshest, most intolerable historical conditions as if they were natural and therefore unchangeable; the need to take a methodological position allowing a global vision of the human situation, rather than a compartmentalized one; the critique of technico-formal rationality as that which ignores science as a human enterprise. These ideas are born proudly finished, complete, perfect; the works that will follow, such as *The Dialectic of Enlightenment* (co-authored with Adorno) and *The Eclipse of Reason* can be considered deep, if not brilliant, extensions of the original work, but nothing more than that.

For this reason, right-wing attempts to appropriate the later Horkheimer by using a few of his phrases out of context or by headlining an interview with sensational formulations, freely transcribed and interpreted, would seem at best arbitrary and misleading. No doubt, Horkheimer himself fell victim to such practices, even though he long ago denounced the manipulatory approach of contemporary journalism.[2]

But a return to the texts themselves would restore totally his extraordinary intellectual and historical stature. What inspires him is his awareness of the links between the historical situation, the economic structures and the conscious attitudes of human beings living in society. It is regrettable that this global scheme could not be complemented by an effective sociology that could incorporate methodically controlled and politically oriented field work. Horkheimer did not have the tools nor the disposition to do so, attached as he was to a typically nineteenth century intellectual perspective.

---

*Originally published as Part VI of Ferrarotti's *Il Pensiero Sociologico da Auguste Comte a Max Horkheimer* (Milan, 1974), pp. 223-251. English translation by David J. Parent.

1. *Autorität und Familie* (Paris, 1936).
2. *Eclipse of Reason* (New York, 1947).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Authority, the Family, and the Social Reproduction of Consensus

The key concepts on which Horkheimer's essay in *Autorität und Familie* turns, and which will in various forms be those of the so-called "Frankfurt school" down to Habermas, are: "culture," "authority," and "family." The novelty of this approach consists in the fact that a strictly speculative and highly abstract investigation does not seek to justify its own propositions by purely theoretical arguments, but rather through historical reality. Here, the concept of culture is clearly distinguished from its purely philosophical meaning as a complex of shared and co-lived experiences and values. In this sense Horkheimer can affirm that "both the subjectivist-anthropological and objectivist modes of viewing cultural institutions have their justification." But he adds that "the preservation of outmoded structures too has its source in human nature."[3] He explains that by these words he does not mean an "original essence" and still less one that is "eternal or uniform." Man has no nature, but a history. For that reason all theories that see in the movement of society a mere reflection of a "fundamental ahistorical unity" are open to criticism.

Practical human attitudes and behavior are, for Horkheimer, historical realities: they follow no model of meta-historical human nature. The fixed character of habit is based, as Max Weber would say, on the "authority of the eternal yesterday," and though it appears as a complex of "natural" characteristics, it is nothing but the product of circumstantial historical conditions. The transformation of the given society into a more rational one, less conditioned by chance and accident, cannot be considered as something which depends on the strength of individuals. Horkheimer is convinced that the problem of individuals is not a *particular* problem. To hope for historical change resulting from individual effort means to fall into resignation, thus to accept a sterile moralistic hope. Horkheimer writes: "The relatively stable system of long-practiced, effortless behavior which men of a particular period or class manifest, the manner in which they accept their situation with the help of conscious and unconscious psychic practices, the infinitely differentiated and continuously revised structure of preferences, acts of faith, evaluations, and fantasies... This set of internal contrivances which, despite its complexity, is for the most part the daughter of necessity—all this is preserved in many instances simply because to leave the old way of life and adopt a new one, especially if the latter demands increased rational activity, requires strength and courage; in brief, it requires an immense psychic effort."[4]

Courage? Immense psychic effort? Is all this truly sufficient? Is it really only a question of psychic energy and spiritual strength? On this point Horkheimer does not offer a conclusive answer to dispel the danger of a culturalistic interpretation of social development. He simply claims that authority—particularly faith in authority—is an instinctive historical force which is sometimes "productive" and sometimes "obstructive." Authority is a decisive but highly ambiguous category! "A general definition of authority would necessarily be almost empty of content, but this is true of all definitions which attempt to capture elements of social life in a way that would be valid for all of history."[5] The concept of authority acquires its full meaning when united to other interrelated concepts of a general theory of society not only on the analytical level, but in the specific meaning of a specific theory, i.e., insofar as it refers to a particular historical phase and to specific forms of authority relations. This is what clarifies the contradictory character of authority, for "authority as accepted dependence... can imply a relationship which fosters progress, is in the interests of all

3. Max Horkheimer, *Critical Theory* (New York, 1972), pp. 66-67.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 69.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

parties, and favors the development of human powers. But it can also sum up in one word all those social relationships and ideas which have long since lost their validity, are now artificially maintained, and are contrary to the true interests of the majority."[6]

But authority must not be confused with authoritarianism. To show why, Horkheimer provides a broad historical summary of typical rank-relationships from the age of absolutism to bourgeois thought. Beginning with the struggle against the authority of tradition in the name of individual reason as the legitimate source of law and truth, in his analysis of the social situation corresponding to late capitalism, he ends up showing that "in the present economic system society appears to be as blind as subrational nature. For men do not use communal reflection and decision to regulate the process by which they earn their living in association with others."[7] Horkheimer's conclusion contains the seeds of all later reflections in *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*: "The fullest possible adaptation of the subject to the reified authority of the economy is the form which reason really takes in bourgeois society."[8]

Horkheimer describes the process of the proletarianization of the peasants who were expelled from the fields in the 16th century when the landowners decided to raise cattle instead of crops. Those peasants were "liberated in a negative way," i.e., simply deprived of the elementary means of subsistence. The history of "free workers" is in reality an epic of misery. "The factories," Horkheimer writes, "were places of horror. Their ususal connection with orphanages, asylums, and hospitals did not mean that the place of work was simultaneously a hospital but rather that the hospital became a workplace and that men died of toil rather than of illness."[9]

What Horkheimer finds extraordinary is that the capitalist way of life—a product of the "industrial revolution"—is considered by the majority of mankind to be "natural," whereas it is a historical relation conditioned by particular circumstances and not a supra-historical, unchangeable and eternal relation. The authority implicit in the bourgeois system of labor, the power relation on which it is based, the state of subordination in which it places humans—all that seems to be the necessary consequence of a natural state, or at least it masquerades as the result of historical rationality. Even the philosophical expressions of "liberty," understood as the struggle and emancipation of the relation of authority, are deceptive, since the freedom of the emancipated individual from authority is no more than an appearance, severely conditioned by the objective character of social life.

This principle enunciated by Horkheimer is not new, and is almost literally connected with the Marxist formulations in *The German Ideology*. The intellectual who considers himself the unique and zealous repository of liberty and whom Mannheim supposes to be "free-floating" above the interests of the social classes locked in perpetual combat, the philosopher whom Husserl sees as guarding noble values, the true "defender of humanity"—all those who elaborated the universal, meta-historical worth of culture and its values, relegated to the atmosphere of a presumably harmonious Olympus—they all get what's coming to them in Horkheimer's pages. He applies this to the intimate everyday affairs of social life, and cuts deeply into the binding, dogmatic thick skin of the social professions: "A good instance of the liberal, as he still exists in a relatively strong bourgeois community, presents a picture of freedom, openness, and good will. He knows himself to be the very opposite of a slave.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 70-71.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 222.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 83.
9. *Ibid.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Yet his sense of justice and his clarity of purpose operate within definite limits set by the economic mechanism and do not find expression in an ordering of social reality as a whole... He is less his own master than he first appears. His sense of personal independence and his corresponding respect for the freedom and dignity of his fellows are noble but abstract and naive as well."[10] One is reminded here of Max Weber's "naïveté." On the very eve of his death, even when faced with the signs of Nazi regression toward barbarity already appearing in his own civilized Bavaria, Weber remained absolutely convinced that the values of the liberal tradition were an eternal achievement. The pseudo-individualism of the great bourgeois and with it all the edifying mythology of success—"that god of the modern world"—and the self-deception of the enterpriser-demiurge, are unmasked with equal clarity.

The social institution that aids and sustains that relation founded "on an obtuse and only apparently rational authority" is, for Horkheimer, the family. It "sees to it that the kind of human character emerges which social life requires, and gives this human being in great measure the indispensable adaptability for a specific authority-oriented conduct on which the existence of the bourgeois order largely depends."[11] The functions of the family are numerous and have been variously studied and interpreted. For Horkheimer they are reducible to and can be summed up in the function of stabilizing authority by constantly asserting the apparent naturalness of paternal power: "The necessity of a division and hierarchy of mankind, resting on natural, accidental, and irrational principles, is so familiar and obvious to the child that he can experience the earth and universe, too, and even the other world, only under this aspect; it is the pregiven mold into which every new impression is poured."[12] The ideas of triumph, money, power, happiness, are seen as closely interrelated. In particular, "for the formation of the authority-oriented character it is especially decisive that the children should learn, under pressure from the father, not to trace every failure back to its social causes but to remain at the level of the individual and to hypostatize the failure in religious terms as sin or in naturalistic terms as deficient natural endowment."[13]

This should not be pictured as an explicit prescriptive pedagogical theory. If such were the case, a mere correction in education methods and in text books would suffice to substitute a liberating socialization in place of an "authoritarian" one which tends to reinforce internal and external behavior that is submissive to authority. Horkheimer's analysis goes deeper and implies not only the provision of intentional educational measures but also the modulation of the power of suggestion exercised by the nuclear family.

This is the central point of Franz Kafka's "Letter to his Father." It is not simply a question of teaching fathers to be "reasonable," "democratic," and "open" toward the child. A course in progressive education, or even direct experience with Montessori methods, would be inadequate for these objectives. But a study of the problem of the family as the essential instrument for reproducing authoritarianism in these terms could reduce these problems and solve the question, if only by abolishing the question. In the sphere of the bourgeois nuclear family, the formation of the authoritarian personality and the exaltation of the instinct of submission are not merely the result of a narrow preparation of the parents, but are constitutive functions which can disregard the nature of education and even the will of the parents. "The child's

10. *Ibid.*, p. 92.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 98.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 106.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

character is formed far more by the very structure of the family than by the conscious intentions and methods of the father... However rationally the father may be acting by his own lights, his social position in relation to the child means that every educational measure he takes, however reasonable, must carry overtones of reward and punishment."[14]

Here Horkheimer's analysis, and more broadly the so-called "Frankfurt school," is an advance beyond the sector-limited analysis of current sociology, which is technically quite elaborate, but too narrowly circumscribed and fragmentary. The study of the family is outlined in terms of the broadest framework of global society. This approach goes beyond merely descriptive sociology (which is by definition incapable of probing the deeper significance of the social phenomena it deals with) and specialized compartmentalization (which has no way of perceiving the dialectical link between important aspects of social life considered as a whole). The consequences are foreseeable. "As long as there is no decisive change in the basic structure of social life and in the modern culture which rests on that structure, the family will continue to exercise its indispensable function of producing specific, authority-oriented types of character." In other words, by means of the family, society will continue to "produce" the type of men that serve it and that it needs. To solve the problem this poses for the family, society itself must be revolutionized. The crisis of the family is not an isolated crisis; it cannot be dealt with in the abstract, apart from the whole, and it cannot be described, interpreted, and solved by putting it in parentheses and 'for good reasons' omitting to consider its social roots in a scientific manner. The family is subordinated to the service and needs of society. The family prepares the sort of people society needs for the current mode of production: it "produces" authoritarian characters, human beings prone to attribute to their own personal talents the responsibility that ought to be ascribed to causes of a structural and social nature.

But family and society always encounter one another as antagonistic factors. The bourgeois nuclear family exalts and confirms the instinct of submission but it also values the element of love which is linked to the mother's ambiguous role. "To the extent that any principle besides that of subordination prevails in the modern family, the woman's maternal and sisterly love keeping alive a social principle dating from before historical antiquity."[15] On this subject, the examination of the work of Le Play, and still more of Hegel, for whom the conflict between the family and public authority were typified by the figure of Antigone battling for her brother's corpse, and finally, the studies of Bachofen and Morgan on the death of matriarchy, are enlightening.

It is thanks to the woman and what she represents, i.e., the non-utilitarian factor that she embodies, that the present type of family still retains an anti-authoritarian dimension, unmediated by the market and separate from the logic of production. Yet, for the very same reason, the development of woman is continuously blocked by artificial obstacles; social and public life is reserved for men, and within the family woman's role involves a relation of pure dependency which has persisted through the centuries. The circle has thus come full turn. The family, which at the dawn of capitalism was always the "reproductive cell" in a rich dialectical relation with society, is now reduced to a pure instrument serving the needs of advanced industrial development, under the double profile of production and consumption. The father has become the employer.

Fromm writes about the task of exploring psychological aspects of the relation

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 114.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 118.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

between authority and the family, including that of defining the components of the authoritarian-masochistic character. At least fifteen years before the socio-psychological concept "authoritarian character" was systematically used in the investigations of Adorno, Else Frenkel-Brunswik, D.J. Levinson and R. Nevitt Sanford in *The Authoritarian Personality*, Fromm already dealt with its basic constitutive elements and the typical dynamism of its development. Fromm's treatment seems particularly successful where, inspired by the work of Freud and Abraham on the "anal character," he reveals the perfect correspondence between the gratifying impulses of the authoritarian character and particular "social" virtues or values, i.e., the socially admissible and auspicious ones, such as avarice, order, scrupulousness, and obstinacy, on the one hand, and the pleasure that the authoritarian character derives from the obedience and submission of another person, on the other. "Though the pleasure of obedience and submission as such," Fromm writes, "remains subconscious and concealed by rationalizations such as legality, necessity, reasonableness, it remains decisive for the authoritarian character that the situations in which he can obey, give him satisfaction, and when he meets them in reality he finds no need to modify them, but instead confirms them."

But Fromm does not limit himself to a description of the explicit behavior of the authoritarian character as shaped by objective circumstances. It is true that the first part of Fromm's article is dedicated to the many aspects of authority and to the various configuration of relations between superiors and subordinates. He examines numerous situations: from the relation of the son to the father in a particular type of family structure of small rural proprietorship, to that of a woman patient with her doctor, and of the Catholic believer with his personal confessor, and so on. The conclusion is that the bond of authority is not a strictly coercive behavior, but is produced through a constriction. Using a formulation advanced by Simmel, Fromm stresses that the relation to authority is the emotional bond of a subordinate to a superior person or institution.

The bond of authority, in other words, is complex. It always contains an element of fear together with an element of esteem, of admiration and love together with hatred. Fromm, following the Freudian model, understands this complexity in terms of two questions—that of mass society and that of the formation of the superego, initially designated by Freud as "the ideal self" and "the ideal of the self."

Fromm does not lack criticisms of Freud. While recognizing the great contributions of the master, he criticizes his thinking particularly for its high degree of formalism, which allows Freud to attribute to the superego all the functions that he did not intend to attribute to the ego and the id, while at the same time not distinguishing sufficiently between the various types of identification that sharper analysis brings out. Fromm has started along the road to neo-Freudian revisionism and, though he does not fail to make use of Freud's extraordinary discoveries, he always remains quite free in applying them to particular problems.

In analyzing the dynamics of authority in the family, Fromm masterfully captures the dialectical bond by which the family is linked with the formation of the superego of the child, on the one hand, and the legitimation of authority within global society on the other. "The external power operating in society," Fromm writes, "is encountered by the child who grows up in the sphere of the patriarchal family mainly in the person of the father. By identification with the father and by internalization of his orders and prohibitions, the superego is vested with moral attributes and power. Once such an authority is established, if it corresponds with the process of identification, there is an inverse process. The superego is constantly reprojected onto the wielders of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dominant authority in society, or in other words the individual invests effective authority with the attributes of his own superego. By this act of projection of the superego onto authority, the latter is largely removed from critical reason. It is shaped in its morality, wisdom, capacity, to a great extent independently of real manifestations. In such a way authority in turn becomes continually internalized and representative of the superego."

This statement of the dialectical nature of authority together with the critique of Freud, including his observation that Freud paid greater attention to the social conditioning of the father's character than any previous writers, lays the foundations for Fromm's treatment of "the social nature of personality," or "social personality." This does not mean that all is done and that theory emerges fully armed from Zeus' head like Pallas Athena. But one cannot help notice or at least foresee the indispensible premises.

Fromm's approach is essentially psychological. Starting with the Freudian definition of character not as a sum of particular traits but as a "determinate structure" for which the change of one aspect of character conditions all the others, Fromm elaborates the theory of the necessary relation between masochism and sadism, which implies that to distinguish between the two we need only say that in one case the sadistic tendency is dominant while in the other it is censured, repressed and submerged. "The masochistic tendency," Fromm writes, "causes the individual to renounce the individuality of his own personality and his own happiness and to surrender to power, abolishing himself as it were in it, and to find pleasure and satisfaction in that dedication, which in pathological cases can reach the point of voluntary endurance of physical sufferings. The sadistic tendency has the opposite purpose of making the other person the pliant and defenseless instrument of one's own will, of dominating him absolutely and totally and in extreme cases of making him suffer and express such sufferings emotionally."

The point is that sadism and masochism are always mutually inclusive and correlated, so that in sado-masochism the censured, repressed and displaced opposite does not disappear completely, but emerges at the most diverse points, however much it may conceal itself. This explains the extraordinary ambivalence of the sado-masochistic nature of authority which, while itself prostrated before greater strength, enjoys inflicting persecutions and sufferings upon the weaker. The phenomenology of the linkage and behavior of the sado-masochistic character studied by Fromm is rich and enlightening, but only rarely and sporadically does it transcend the limits of a strictly psychological approach.

One indication of the "cultural institutionality" which reinforces faith in the "omnipotence of authority" ought to be seen in the last part of Fromm's essay, which deals with "sense of distance" as a means of presenting the bearers of authority as something special, and that also functions to increase the sense of unconditional inferiority in the subordinates. Authority, which by nature is powerful and generates fear, is thus transformed into a moral model according to which submission is demanded. Typically social, and not just psychological factors, have contributed to this model. In this area the family plays a critical role. "The child," Fromm observes, "is led to believe that its parents do not lie and that they are effectively adorned with all the moral qualities which they demand of the child... This aspect is one of the family's most important functions: it educates the child to consider certain moral qualities to be connected with authority, thus contributing to the production of the authoritarian character. The child suffers one of the most serious traumas of his life when he begins to discover that his parents are in reality far from living up to their own

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prescriptions. But when this happens, he substitutes other authorities, such as the school, and later those presented by the press, etc., and authority remains impenetrable to him so that he retains the original illusions identifying authority and morality."

The negative side of the predominantly psychological approach of this analysis is felt mainly in the question of the "rebellion against authority." Fromm recognizes that however solid authority may seem, the history of both individuals and of society is "a series of rebellions." Obviously, a correct evaluation of the various types of "revolts" requires the preliminary and accurate analysis of the historical, economic and political conditions in which the event occurs. Fromm's evaluation, purely psychological and metahistorical, leaves much to be desired. The whole question of anarchy seems to be treated in a superficial and ambiguous manner. "The anarchistic types are typical examples of that rebellious character and if they were transformed into adorers of power, little would be changed in them from a psychological viewpoint. From this type of rebel one arrives, via various intermediary stages, at the type that abandons the person who had until then been the object of authority, only to submit simultaneously to a new authority. The cause of this can be seen both as resentment for unjust treatment or denial of love on the part of the old authority."

Resentment, disillusionment, love, and so on—these are psychological concepts that must also be examined within an essentially economic and political framework. Fromm does not seem to be unaware of this complexity, but even where he ought to introduce a sociological mode of analysis, he reverts back to a perfect symmetry between psychology and political action, and he inevitably asserts the primacy of the psychic over the economic. Indeed, I fail to see how he can avoid the pitfall of moralistic reasoning. Fromm writes: "This rebellion in which the object changes but the authoritarian structure remains intact and even is ultimately reinforced and whose ideal is the type of rebel who has acquired power, is sociologically of the greatest importance. Such rebellion can contain the seeds of 'revolution.' The new authority serves as a revolt against the former authority and increases the illusion that the struggle against the repressive authority is a struggle against repression in general... It could be, but the basic psychic structure is not modified, the revolt turns out to be a passing explosion of resentment and rebellion and the new authority occupies the position that the old one was no longer able to maintain."

The old and the new authority are, however, substantially equivalent. They are the simple, almost mechanical response to unchangeable and inescapable "impulses." Their transformation should not be interpreted as the rational outcome of a political project or an historical-economic program. It is only the expression of a basic ambivalence whose causal matrix lies in the very psychic constitution. I spoke of the role of moralism and of the reversal that this implies for any project whose aim is the rational transformation of traditional society. Beyond moralism, which is a form of refined scepticism, an iconoclastic cynicism like Pareto's begins to flourish. Indeed, the affirmation of the instinctive apparatus and of "impulses" from the unconscious is a step in that direction. From this perspective, history, i.e., the cumulative effect of human efforts within given economic and political circumstances, is reduced to a monotonous war between the weakened or declining power elites and the emerging elites, "new potential instances of authority," ready to scale the heights of power and, no less than the deposed ones, to use it for their own egoistic ends.

In his essay on authority in *Studies in Critical Philosophy*, Marcuse claims that Pareto "is the first writer in the monopoly phase of capitalism to deal with the psychological problem of class domination and even the first to put authority in a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

social context." Marcuse reconstructs in detail the relation between authority and the family found in the ideas of theorists from Luther and Calvin to Sorel and Pareto, by way of Kant, Hegel and Marx. He succeeds in revealing the real bond and structures of domination, and at the end of his own investigation he points out that the "psychic constant" and its "rationalization" inscribed in a "theory of social domination" are decisive in Pareto. Indeed, "all domination is based on coercion and on the rationalization of coercion, but that is not enough to guarantee the stability and continuity of domination: the more or less spontaneous consent of the governed is necessary..."

According to Marcuse, Pareto saw more clearly than Sorel the importance of the family for maintaining and reproducing authority. While Sorel sees the monogamous family as "the administrator of the moral code of mankind," but does not establish its connection with bourgeois society, Pareto's positivist analysis penetrates much more deeply into the dialectical substance of social reality. It is interesting to note how Marcuse's criticisms of the "psychological" and "irrational" elements of Pareto's system could apply against some proponents of the Frankfurt school, especially as regards their reliance on "determinate psychic mechanisms for the analysis and explanation of social phenomena." Indeed, this shows that, despite the formal distinction between positivism and idealism, the two are closely related.

The authors of *Authorität und Familie* sought to connect their theoretical claims with empirical investigations meant to provide the material necessary for empirical verification. The second part of the work is in fact dedicated entirely to this research. That the attempt is not completely successful is not due to theoretical errors in carrying out the study or to a lack of methodological skills, but mainly to the difficulty of the problems studied. The research could be superficially divided into three groups: a) a survey of workers and employees; b) a survey on sexual morals; and c) a survey among experts on authority and family.

The questionnaires used show a modicum of formalization; the foreseen responses are almost all open, i.e., qualitative and not precodified. No calculation of correlations is attempted, nor is it possible to establish any connection between the variables considered particularly significant, even given the need to stress the relation between psychic and economic structures characterizing the social context. This last objective remains more a programmatic expression than anything else. It should come as no surprise that the surveys do not produce substantial modifications and do not necessitate a reformulation of the basic proposition on sado-masochism and on the "authoritarian character" presented in the "theoretical" essays written by Horkheimer, Fromm and Marcuse.

The survey focuses on two groups of problems: authority as it constitutes one of the most important factors of social dynamics, and the family as it constitutes the social basis of personality formation. Given the imprecise nature of the technical tools used, the survey can legitimately be considered a pre-testing operation, essential for designing the questionnaire and weighting it according to the public and the interviewers. In the introductory note, Erich Fromm observes at length that with their emigration to the United States the collaborators of the Institute will be presented with "the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the most advanced American methods of investigation."

It is difficult to say whether that opportunity is good or bad. The methods of social investigation in the United States seem traditionally to be tilted toward the psychological; in studying social phenomena, the tendency is to avoid both the economic and the political dimensions—not to mention the historical dimension, which is simply ignored. Social problems thus lose their objective firmness and are

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

transformed into problems of interpersonal adaptation. Instead of being an essential instrument for the preliminary clarification of questions and for the positive advancement to their solution by means of changes in the socio-economic structure, sociological investigations in the United States are merely technical studies to obtain and confirm an a-critical mass conformism.

The study of psychology must always be integrated with the analysis of the structural character and the economic and political dimensions of social phenomena, otherwise it falls into a psychologistic trap, which necessarily reduces the objective problems such as power relations into problems of pure states of mind and interpersonal relations. In addition to this, there is the tendency, so strong and typical among the scholars of the Frankfurt school, to avoid particular historical and political situations and to attempt instead a speculative analysis of a wide category of "domination" as such, separated from empirical investigation and indifferent to the economic and juridical structure. The need for a global study of problems that has constantly been advocated by the Frankfurt school is certainly valid, but since they attach less importance to specific field studies and since their theory posits an opposition between positivism and critical reflection, the globality they speak of risks being reduced to an empty traditional universalism as the end-point of a spurious totalization which has lost contact with the historically determined character of the structure.

The Eclipse of Reason

In this perspective, the problems posed to humanity become insoluble, the liberty of the Enlightenment is transformed into its contrary, and the dream of an emancipated humanity gives way to a new barbarism. The very radical quality of denunciated evil acquires the tone and dimension of a new metaphysics. Horkheimer discovered the definitive words to express this despairing impasse: "If one were to speak of a disease affecting reason, this disease should be understood not as having stricken reason at some historical moment but as being inseparable from the nature of reason in civilization as we have known it so far. The disease of reason is that reason was born from man's urge to dominate nature..."[16] The philosophical confirmation of this cruel self-accusation that reason pronounces against itself is seen most clearly in Horkheimer's *The Eclipse of Reason*. Here three separate and previously antagonistic spheres are brought in contact: reason, the subject, and nature. The attempt to dominate nature, to understand its secret and "laws" in order to subjugate it, required the establishment of an impersonal bureaucratic, "scientific" organization which in the name of victory over nature ended in reducing the human subject to a mere instrument. In this situation, the concept of formalized reason and the subject-object dialectic are necessary and inevitable results.

According to Horkheimer, the present crisis of reason "consists fundamentally in the fact that at a certain point thinking either became incapable of conceiving such objectivity at all or began to negate it as a delusion."[17] The critical element sustaining the basic achievement of modern philosophy is the prolongation of a methodical scepticism that eats to the roots of the concept of truth and robs it of all meaning, transforming it into a merely subjective convention, formalized according to arbitrary limits: "The process was gradually extended to include the objective content of every rational concept. In the end, no particular reality can seem reasonable per se; all the basic concepts, emptied of their content, have come to be only formal shells. As reason

16. M. Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason, op.cit.*, p. 176.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is subjectivized, it also becomes formalized."[18]

It is not a question of the relation between the natural and the social sciences, or of the cultural relation which was the crucial reference point of contemporary German thought and which generated the famous *Methodenstreit* in which writers such as Rickert, Windelband and Weber firmly opposed the possibility of a positivist analysis. Horkheimer's intention is different. "This book," he writes, "takes a different approach. Its aim is to inquire into the concept of rationality that underlies our contemporary industrial culture, in order to discover whether this concept does not contain defects that vitiate it essentially."[19] The essential defect of reason today in technically progressive industrial society must, according to Horkheimer, be regarded as an operational transformation in which reason is at once artifice and victim. This consists in substituting the means for the ends and winds up by instrumentalizing reason itself in the very name of reason, by reducing it to necessary, predictable and programmed thought—an integral part of the process of production. This shows that the Enlightenment has been turned into its direct opposite.

The Enlightenment's individual liberty enters into crisis when change from an elitist to a mass culture is occurring alongside the transition from liberal, competitive capitalism to a capitalism dominated by an ever smaller number of large oligopolistic and monopolistic concentrations. Horkheimer approaches the problem both philosophically and socially: "Having given up autonomy, reason has become an instrument. In the formalistic aspect of subjective reason, stressed by positivism, its unrelatedness to objective content is emphasized; in its instrumental aspect, stressed by pragmatism, its surrender to heteronomous contents is emphasized. Reason has become completely harnessed to the social process. Its operational value, its role in the domination of men and nature, has been made the sole criterion."[20]

Domination is the truly universal and all-comprehensive category. But what kind of domination? It is no longer a personal domination—the lordly type of "employer." Nor is it a domination of the subjective ideas that have manipulated the world of objective relations toward their own ends and logic. It is rather an impersonal and anonymous domination, in pure flux, the consequence of decisions arising from the instinct of self-preservation but filtered through a rational calculation that undermines the self and negates existence as the instinctive, inventive reaction to objective conditions: "As the end result of the process, we have on the one hand the self, the abstract ego emptied of all substance except its attempt to transform everything in heaven and on earth into means for its preservation, and on the other hand an empty nature degraded to mere material, mere stuff to be dominated, without any purpose than that of this very domination."[21]

Thus objective spirit—unprejudiced liberty of individual criticism that once was the basis of the justification and progressiveness of the Enlightenment—now has the same "obscurantist," regressive function of the objective reason of authoritarian religions and metaphysical philosophy. Horkheimer's criticism of individual subjective reason does not mean a return to dogmatic reason. On the contrary, it is a revolt against the desiccation of instincts—those essential impulses that have been so impoverished in the rational process. Without any concession to irrational tendencies, Horkheimer traces the trajectory which led from authoritarian and dogmatic religion to a complex of arbitrary, subjectivist constructions, incorporated into the massification of society and

18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*, p. v.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

new forms of domination. Horkheimer failed to provide us with its phenomenology, but he did produce a marvelous account of the stages in the proletarianization of the mind in the modern world.

Total Bureaucratization and the Fate of the Individual

Horkheimer's criticism covers the entire range of modern thought from neo-Thomism to neo-positivism. For Horkheimer instrumentality is not alien to the philosophical enterprise as such: "But the transition from objective to subjective reason was not an accident, and the process of development of ideas cannot arbitrarily at any given moment be reversed. If subjective reason in the form of enlightenment has dissolved the philosophical basis of beliefs that have been an essential part of Western culture, it has been able to do so because this basis proved to be too weak. Their revival, therefore, is completely artificial: it serves the purpose of filling a gap. The philosophies of the absolute are offered as an excellent instrument to save us from chaos. Sharing the fate of all the doctrines, good or bad, that pass the test of present-day social mechanisms of selection, objectivistic philosophies become standardized for specific uses. Philosophical ideas serve the needs of religious or enlightened, progressive or conservative groups. The absolute becomes itself a means, objective reason a scheme for subjective purposes, general as they may be."[22]

This criticism covers all of modern philosophy. But art? Isn't it possible through art to capture and express a meaning of reality not mediated by rational calculation and not preoccupied with relating ends and means, or as a consequence of utilitarian objectives?

Horkheimer's answer is negative: "Once it was the endeavor of art, literature, and philosophy to express the meaning of things and of life, to be the voice of all that is dumb, to endow nature with an organ for making known her sufferings, or we might say, to call reality by its rightful name. Today nature's tongue is taken away. Once it was thought that each utterance, word, cry, or gesture had an intrinsic meaning; today it is merely an occurrence."[23]

On the other hand, we can expect nothing from traditional philosophical reflection: neo-Thomism is futile; pragmatism can survive only to the extent that it proceeds to an ever greater and more coherent functionalizing of thought; neo-positivism, finally, pronounces a death sentence on scientific thinking. But science, which rises victorious from beneath the ruins of traditional philosophy, has nothing to say about the fundamental demand for a meaning to life, and the position of the individual in the world—questions that concern modern man. Proceeding from the formulation of the hypothesis to the act of verification, it shows its cool neutrality, behind which may of course be hidden a constellation of interests or a political strategem—and even an aberration such as Nazism. But the fact that while dealing with dynamic principles science must also take multiple phenomena into account does not escape Horkheimer. Yet, whatever the modes of thought and the specific conceptions of scientific thinking may be, it cannot be forgotten that they are in fact auxilliary instruments of production. Beyond that, any scientific fact is an eminently social fact. From the wheel to anti-matter, all scientific facts are not solely relevant for science and indicate no superiority of scientism as a model for culture and society: "Like any existing creed, science can be used to serve the most diabolical social forces, and scientism is no less narrow-minded than militant religion."[24] Horkheimer does

22. *Ibid.*, p. 62.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 101.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 71.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not see clearly how, in the present process of production, science becomes a directly productive force instead of being merely applied via the mediation of technology. Thus, his position must not be confused with Marcuse's, nor with that of apocalyptic authors who, by denouncing science, really express the holy hope of a prompt return to the Middle Ages. For Horkheimer, science is not what can save humanity: rather in a free society, not fragmented and divided by objective contradictions of interests, science can attain an autonomous and coherent development: "Only under ideally harmonious conditions could progressive historical changes be brought about by the authority of science."[25]

But the present situation is far from harmonious, and there is no easy consolation: "If one were to speak of a disease affecting reason, this disease should be understood not as having stricken reason at some historical moment, but as being inseparable from the nature of reason in civilization... Thus the derangement of reason goes far beyond the obvious malformation that characterizes it at the present time. Reason can realize itself only through reflecting on the disease of the world as produced and reproduced by man; in such self-critique, reason will at the same time remain faithful to itself, by preserving and applying for no ulterior motive the principle of truth that we owe to reason alone."[26]

But, is it possible for reason to go outside reason? Is it possible for culture to transcend culture? Is the self-awareness of reason sufficient to heal the ailment and cure the essential vice of domination? Is it not perhaps necessary, in the desire to avoid falling into prohibitively dogmatic or metaphysical positions, to patiently explore that constellation of material interests and those objective contradictions of social life that Horkheimer considers as the crucial distortions of human life? Mass culture, the industrial society of the masses, atomization of the individual and his subjection to the impersonal authorities of the administrative apparatus on a vast scale: all that does not stem from or affect just the intellectual plane, but it takes us to the objective conditions of the social process in its historical development.

These objective contradictions were not sufficiently treated by Horkheimer or by the members of the Frankfurt school. But if the questions raised by Horkheimer are squarely faced, then it must be recognized that he has brought them to the programmatic stage. More clearly than others, he has seen the necessity for culture to transcend culture if it is to change life. Horkheimer criticized all abstractly philosophizing intellectuals. Yet, he himself remained a pure intellectual: one of Europe's last great "private intellectuals." Concepts and empirical facts were not connected and the totalization resulted in a vacuous synthesis. The venture failed, but it is hard not to admire the splendor of that failure.

---

25. *Ibid.*, p. 83.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 176-177.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Reply to Miller's Review of Habermas' *Legitimation Crisis*

by Jeremy J. Shapiro

Despite the thoughtfulness, sincerity, and energy that James Miller has put into his review of Habermas' *Legitimation Crisis*, the review seems so inadequate and full of misunderstandings that it calls for critique and clarification. There are several reasons why I want to respond to Miller's review. The first is that *Legitimation Crisis* is an important book, from which people concerned with capitalism and socialism might learn something. By designating "the work of Jürgen Habermas. . . as little more than a provocative *cul de sac*," Miller implies that no one should take the trouble even to read the book. While I doubt that Habermas' important contributions will be buried by Miller's review, it would be unfortunate if, on account of the review, anyone would pass over *Legitimation Crisis* as an irrelevancy. The second reason is that Miller clearly does not understand some of Habermas' basic ideas, and since Miller's misunderstanding seems to echo widespread misunderstandings of Habermas, it will be useful to clear up some of them.

The third reason is perhaps the most important, although it is the one that will be least adequately served by this short reply. It is this: one of Habermas' most important contributions to the development of Marxian theory is to have provided some of Marx's basic assumptions with a new interpretation and a more secure grounding in a changed historical (and intellectual) situation. Perhaps the most crucial of these assumptions is the rationalism on which Marx's work and the Marxian tradition is based. Marx assumed that human beings were rational: that they could attain objective knowledge about the world and, on the basis of this knowledge, in free assocation, control society and history and make them responsive to human needs. The entire validity of Marxian socialism rests on this assumption: without it, Marxism loses its claim to be the most universal representative of the human need and striving for equality, justice, democracy, and freedom. Much that has happened in the twentieth century has undermined the apparent validity of this assumption, even for those who call themselves Marxists. Habermas' work is in the main line of Marxian socialism in attempting to expand, elaborate, and justify this rationalism and to provide it with the most scientific basis possible given current knowledge. Clearly, Marx assumed that a socialist society would necessarily involve "public, unrestricted discussion, free from domination." It is hard to imagine how else a socialist society could call itself free and democratic. That Miller and many other allegedly socialist critics of Habermas insist that "the good society appears here as a professorial nightmare, a babel of deliberative gobbledygook," is both saddening and alarming: saddening insofar as for them socialism appears to have become a form of irrationalist *ressentiment*, alarming insofar as it is a poor prognosis for the resurgence of a really vital and radical socialism.

It is true that Habermas writes in a way that is sometimes hard to follow and that sometimes obscures the politically radical intention of what he is doing. It is true that he sometimes gets bogged down in jargon and writes as though he were talking to himself or a small cricle of colleagues rather than trying to help educate the public—traits which appear to contradict his commitment to public discussion and enlightenment. But it is the obligation of the critic and reviewer, particularly in a socialist journal, to help bring to light and make accessible important truths rather

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

than fasten on the difficulties and impediments: in short, to engage in comradely criticism and self-criticism. In what follows, I will limit myself to commenting on specific points made by Miller as they appear in his review. Page references are to *Telos* 25 (Fall 1975) unless otherwise stated.

1) Habermas does not argue that contradictions within the economic order have been *displaced* to the political and cultural orders (p. 210). He emphasizes the importance of economic contradictions in late capitalism. But he argues that the capitalist system can most usefully be analyzed as an interlocking set of four areas or subsystems (economic, political-administrative, legitimative, and motivational) that are involved in contradictoins, both individually and in interaction, which have changed over time. This point would scarcely be worth making except in relation to Miller's assertion that Habermas is increasingly distancing himself from the Marxian tradition.

2) Since the last part of *Legitimation Crisis* is a critique of systems theory (as is Habermas' extensive critique of systems theory in *Theorie der Gesellschaft oder Sozialtechnologie?*) it is hard to understand whence Miller derives his idea that Habermas falls "oddly mute" before the claims of systems theory. In the context of Habermas' critique, the "partiality for reason" he invokes is a defense of the Marxian idea that it is possible for human beings to construct a democratic socialist society, since that is what is denied by systems theory. That Miller calls this a "note of resignation" means either that he has misunderstood Habermas' argument or that he is under the influence of the childish idea that to be radical a book must end with a "call for political action" (211).

3) Habermas does not "resurrect the pessimistic motif" of the Frankfurt School by assuming that no one in contemporary society would have an inherent interest in emancipation. To the contrary, Habermas' point is that the majority, if not everyone, in contemporary society has an interest in emancipation, and that contemporary capitalism *cannot* "integrate without remainder the very individuals who might critically confront it." In this Habermas is completely at odds with the theory of one-dimensionality and the "pessimism" of the Frankfurt School.

4) A large portion of Miller's review seems based on a curious notion, namely that Habermas is influenced by systems theory even though he criticizes it, and that this is somehow bad. In the name of what orthodoxy ought a theorist, Marxian or otherwise, preserve him- or herself against "contamination" by other theories? Imagine substituting the words "classical economics" and "Marx" for "systems theory" and "Habermas" in the following sentences (213): "On the other hand, this book's dilemmas are symptomatic of the problems in Habermas' broader approach. If, after all, he can acquiesce so easily in so much of systems theory, what must be the status of critique in his own work?" Miller's assumption that one should resist learning from systems theory or any other body of thought is frightening. Hopefully it is not a representative point of view. The irony of it here is that through his assumption of orthodoxy as a moral imperative Miller fully misses the point that Habermas is making: that Marxism itself is a form of systems theory to the extent that it talks about the development of the capitalist system in analytical isolation from the "superstructure" of values, ideologies, and personality structure. When Habermas talks about life-world and system he is simply reformulating the classical Marxian problem of the relation between superstructure and base. Habermas prefers to use the terms "system" and "life-world" to avoid the conceptual prejudice contained in the classical terms, which encourage people to overlook the fact that the capitalist system can function as a system only if it is supported by a particular set of motivations and beliefs. If this were not the case, socialist revolution would be impossible.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

5) In his discussion of the problem of "grounding" critical theory, which he formulates quite well, Miller errs in setting up a dichotomy between "history" and "anthropology." Any theory of world history, such as Hegel's, Marx's, or Habermas', must be rooted in an anthropology in the sense of setting out the fundamental factors that enter into history. In the *German Ideology* Marx delineated the concrete species characteristics of human beings, such as the production of their own means of existence, forms of interaction, and language, that underlie all historical developments. Anthropology enters into history wherever we make assumptions about what it is that is evolving or having (or making) a history. In this regard Habermas is more materialist and "more of a Marxist" than the classical theorists of the Frankfurt School, particularly insofar as he has been incorporating recent knolwedge about evolution and the transition from primate to human society in his work. Thus, it is hard to see where Miller finds the justification for asserting that Habermas finds fault with Adorno because the latter ties "critical thought, in its negative definitions, to the reality it analyzes" (215). Miller has not understood Habermas' argument that the negative concept of freedom used by Adorno already presupposes fundamental "anthropological" characteristics of human language and action, which are "historical" in that they are rooted in the evolutionary history of the species.

In this context, it is difficult to understand Miller's criticism (219) of Habermas' interpretation of evolution as a learning process. Not only is this a notion that seems borne out by a lot of recent empirical and theoretical work on evolution, but it is a continuous with Marx's conception of the internal logic of technological development. If Miller has empirical grounds for rejecting such a view, he should cite them, rather than refer to this materialist theory of social evolution as a "retreat to transcendental theorems" that recall "Horkheimer's own court of last resort in 1937"

6) Miller's objections to Habermas' theory of communicative competence and the ideal speech situation seem to be based partly on misunderstanding Habermas' argument, partly on erroneous premises about language use. Here I shall briefly outline Habermas' theory and then deal individually with Miller's more important points. I believe that it is essential to spend some time on these issues, because they are by no means of merely technical or academic significance. Perhaps Habermas' greatest contribution to Marxian theory is having liquidated, through his communication theory of society, the individualist assumptions that have dominated bourgeois thought since the late Middle Ages and have extended even into socialist thought, including the critical theory of the Frankfurt School. The debate about Habermas' communication theory, particularly the notions of distorted communication and discursive rationality, is in fact a debate about the possibility of socialism.

The theory of communicative competence argues that the possibility of communication rests on the intersubjective constitution of meaning, such that for a symbol to have the same meaning at either the same time for two human subjects or at more than one time for one subject requires that subjects can generate agreement between themselves through the use of certain features of language (pragmatic universals) and can re-establish such agreement if it degenerates. This agreement establishes 1) identity of meaning of the symbol; 2) intersubjectivity, or identity of meaning for two non-identical subjects; and 3) identity of the individual subjects themselves, through the process of intersubjective recognition. It is through their communicative competence (in combination with their linguistic-grammatical competence and their cognitive-conceptual competence) that human beings simultaneously constitute their own identity, their intersubjectivity with other humans, and the symbols through which they communicate. For any communication or mutual understanding to take place at

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

all requires that all participants in interaction accept certain claims that we implicitly attach to what we communicate, claims that our communication is comprehensible, that the part of it that refers to reality is true, that it is right according to the norms that prevail in the situation (e.g., that I have a right to give you an order or make you a promise), and that it is sincere, i.e., represents my intentions. Communication occurs when all of these claims are accepted. If they are not, communication can be established through metacommunication, i.e., communicating about our communication, which restores agreement or consensus. Discourse is a form of metacommunication in which the truth or rightness claims of communicative acts is established. Without the possibility of metacommunication and discourse, there would be no possibility of continually developing mutual understanding, and communication would be impossible. In other words, every communicative act implies discourse as a court of last resort in the event that the truth or legitimacy of the act is not accepted.

However, the ability to attain consensus is limited by the fact that communication is not a disembodied mechanism but rather comes into being through concrete social relations in which the ability to achieve reciprocity of understanding and of recognition as a human being via communication is impaired by relations of inequality and domination. This impairment takes on the form of repression, in which the inability to communicate is transformed into a particular type of deformed character structure, which assumes as second nature the inability to communicate or arrive at agreement or consensus. And it is this very repression that makes possible the existence of domination and gives it its dialectical quality. In order to exist a social relation has to be accepted and legitimated by its members, and thus has an ultimately "democratic" character. But what about a hierarchical social relation which conflicts with the democratic basis of its own legitimation? It is sustained by the repression that prevents questioning the social relation's claim to legitimacy, which is reflected precisely in the ideology that it is impossible to attain rational consensus, that communication about certain things is impossible or improper, etc. Ideology, in short, is rooted in distorted communication and the psychic repression that perpetuates it. On the basis of this sketch, perhaps some of Miller's points can be cleared up.

a) Miller is correct in distinguishing between coming to an agreement in general and coming to an agreement in a discourse. If I talk with someone who uses a word in an unfamiliar sense and I ask her what she means and she clarifies it, we have established shared meaning without a discourse. If she asserts that the moon is made of green cheese, and I disagree, then we can have a discourse about it through using arguments, marshalling facts, etc. Both of these, however, are different forms of establishing agreement. This distinction, far from being a critique of Habermas, is one of Habermas' basic assumptions.

b) Miller adopts a linguistic conservatism in maintaining that "in colloquial conversation, the question of 'agreeing' to follow these rules does not arise; we are born into a linguistic community, and our competence to speak within that community is measured in terms of our ability to use the language properly" (217). Miller does not recognize that communication is a generative process, in which even the act of following rules is a creative one, since no two communicative situations are ever exactly the same. The system of linguistic rules includes the ability to follow rules, to deviate from them, and to criticize the application of rules or the rules themselves. The rules of linguistic usage do not guarantee a pre-established harmony between individual language users. Any harmony that exists is an ongoing accomplishment of the individuals themselves. The point of Habermas' theory is precisely to account for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

how that agreement comes about. The question of agreement arises in every human interaction, and it is only ideology that tells us that it may not be raised. If this were not true, cultural, linguistic, and political change would be impossible.

Of course, in a certain sense, "the shared context is the precondition of any communication whatsoever: it is not the subject of a conscious agreement, as if two natives, meeting on an island, were to decide to abide by the rules of the German language" (217). This is true to the extent that human beings have been socialized into possessing communicative competence in the first place. But it is precisely this socialization that makes it possible for us to agree and disagree, or understand and misunderstand each other. The shared context is precisely what is established *through* communication. If two natives were to meet on an island, how could they communicate except by constructing intersubjectivity through communicative acts in which they could also establish their understanding or not understanding each other? Miller and I share a communicative context which is not the subject of conscious agreement. This does not prevent me from questioning the meaningfulness or truth value of his review.

d) The idea that every speech is oriented toward the idea of truth and that every discourse is oriented toward consensus may seem shocking, but reflection will show that it is indeed a presupposition of our communication. Clearly every sentence in Miller's review implicitly claims to be true. Miller would probably agree to this, because he concedes that truth may be a feature of rational discourse. But it holds equally of colloquial communication. If Miller's interlocutor (217) is an *acknowledged* liar (i.e., self-acknowledged by the liar) then he or she is not a liar. The question is, how can Miller communicate with a regular liar? That is, how can he have a communicative relation with those whose actions deviate unpredictably from their statements and commitments? Only by regarding them as objects and relating to them strategically rather than communicatively, i.e., the way one might relate to a robot rather than to a human being. In everyday interaction we frequently abandon hopes of achieving agreement and mutual understanding in order to realize our interests or, more frequently, out of fear, inhibition, or repression. But whenever we mentally refuse our assent to the validity claim accompanying a communication without metacommunicating about it, we have at that point stopped communicating with the other people as people and treat them as objects rather than as people with whom we share intersubjectivity. In short, we frequently engage in distorted communication. This is the main goal of Habermas' theory: to find a way of analyzing social structures of domination, inhumanity, and exploitation as distorted communication precisely by showing their deviation from undistorted communication and the contradictions that they thereby generate. Miller, however, completely eliminates Habermas' explanation of distorted communication, which is the empirical reality that can be understood from the perspective of the ideal speech situation. Thus he systematically interprets undialectically a dialectical theory of society, as when he says that Habermas' model of true consensus is "astonishingly naïve" (218). This naïveté is a consequence only of Miller's having abstracted entirely from Habermas' analysis of distorted communication.

e) Miller's references to Weber, Wittgenstein, and Plato are astonishing. He cites Weber's decisionism as an argument without mentioning that a large portion of *Legitimation Crisis* is precisely a refutation of the Weberian view he is invoking (but not "endorsing"). If Miller wants to uphold Weber, then it is up to him to refute Habermas' theory of communicative ethics as set out in the third part of *Legitimation Crisis*. Miller cites Wittgenstein to the effect that language consists "of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

incommensurable universes of discourse which could never be systematically reconciled" (218), such as religious beliefs and mathematical knowledge. The existence of different provinces of meaning and cognition is central to Habermas' theory, as Miller himself mentions earlier (212). But such a *logical* disjunction is not what discursive argument is about. If Miller believes that his own beliefs are about language and Habermas' beliefs belong to different universes of discourse, then why is he writing a review arguing with Habermas? Are defenders of capitalism and socialism simply members of different universes of discourse? Finally, Plato's limitation of dialogue is precisely the sort of distorted communication based on social inequality that Habermas is criticizing with his theory of communication. In *Knowledge and Human Interests* (314f.) Habermas notes that "the ontological illusion of pure theory behind which knowledge-constitutive interests become invisible promotes the fiction that Socratic dialogue is possible everywhere and at any time. From the beginning philosophy has presumed that the autonomy and responsibility posited with the structure of language are not only anticipated but real. It is pure theory, wanting to derive everything from itself, that succumbs to unacknowledged external conditions and becomes ideological. Only when philosophy discovers in the dialectical course of history the traces of violence that deform repeated attempts at dialogue and recurrently close off the path to unconstrained communication does it further the process whose suspension it otherwise legitimates: mankind's evolution toward autonomy and responsibility." It is hard to understand how Miller can cite Plato in opposition to Habermas. As a *profession de foi* this is revealing! As a seriously advanced claim, it is astonishingly naïve.

7) Habermas is akin to Marx and Freud in showing how widely and deeply social structures of oppression and exploitation pervade the entirety of human life in contemporary society and in pointing to the profound and total character of the changes that must be made in order to eliminate these structures. The widespread hostile reaction to Habermas' communication theory is similar to earlier reactions to Marx and to Freud: people have trouble accepting that they themselves are affected by and implicated in these structures. Habermas has always made clear, particularly in *Legitimation Crisis*, that eliminating these structures presupposes democratic socialism of a thoroughly radical kind, which would subject the process of production, political decisions, socialization processes, and life style, to the control of the people. Habermas' commitment to democratic control implies a commitment to rationality: to the idea that people can rationally arrive at agreement with each other when social oppression and domination have been eliminated. This commitment is identical to the commitment of Marxian theory. That Miller characterizes this commitment as "liberal utopianism" (219) is simply indefensible.

Miller's misunderstanding of Habermas, or his disingenuousness, increases as he approaches practical conclusions. Since he has presented little of the substance of Habermas' book, it is easy for him to speak of Habermas' "retreat to transcendental theorems" (219), "detour from questions of historical action and meaning" (219), and "insultation from political and social concerns." From reading Miller's review, the reader could easily get the impression that *Legitimation Crisis* is a work of idealist metaphysics and that Adorno's *Negative Dialectics* is an analysis of capitalism and a program for political action! It is not my intention here to recapitulate Habermas' focus on questions of historical action and meaning and political and social concerns in *Legitimation Crisis*, since that is what the whole book is about, including, in the discussion of communicative ethics, "imagining the kinds of alternative institutions and political devices appropriate to a free society" (219). Instead, I shall limit myself

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to one point in which Miller completely reverses Habermas' meaning and thus deceives the reader.

Habermas' distinction between self-reflection, based on the past, and strategic action oriented toward the future is a restatement of the Marxian idea of revolutionary practice as the sphere in which theory and practice are unified in the actual struggle of human groups in their concrete experience. Habermas is emphasizing here that it is in the nature of historical experience to surpass the completed formulations of theory, which are based on analysis of what has already happened. Political action is not deduced from social and economic theory, it is a creative mediation of knowledge and the experience of emergent social reality in which the actors are themselves participating. Habermas' statement on this subject, quoted by Miller (220) is in no conceivable sense a rejection or critique of "strategic action oriented toward the future." That Miller uses this quotation to prove that "Habermas has abandoned the original project of critical theory" (220), i.e., a transcending historical practice, shows that he has either completely misunderstood Habermas or is deliberately misrepresenting him. Given this misunderstanding, it is not surprising that Miller claims not to understand Habermas' political commitment to "critical attempts to expose the stress limits of advanced capitalism to conspicuous tests" (220). But it *is* a bit hard to believe that a person who can read Plato, Max Weber, Wittgenstein, and Adorno, cannot decipher that sentence as an encouragement to socialist political action.

8) Despite all the flaws of Miller's review, it does convey the sense of a person genuinely concerned with seeking the truth and coming to grips with difficult problems, and Miller does deserve credit for the labor and thought that he has brought to bear on Habermas' work. Particularly his discussion of the problems of the grounding of critical theory and the foundations of communication theory (215-217) seem motivated by a cooperative search for the truth. But the rest of the review seems dominated by the unfortunate samurai tradition of left-wing intellectual criticism: dividing the world into the good guys and bad guys, proving that the opponent is not a revolutionary, is a mere "academic," and so on. I think that it has long been established that anyone raised in the intellectual tradition of Marxism can intellectually tear anyone to shreds at will. But this sort of sword-sharpening merely confirms the feelings of *ressentiment* on the part of the critic. It does nothing toward dealing with the issues of the real world. Habermas' work seems to continually inflame this *ressentiment* among left-wing intellectuals, which only delays serious consideration of the issues to be faced if we are to deal constructively with the present world situation.

Moral Development and Ego Identity: A Clarification by Dick Howard

As the result of a "distorted communication process," *Telos* neglected to print the following charts which should have accompanied Jürgen Habermas' article, "Moral Development and Ego Identity" (*Telos* 24, pp. 41-55). The article—originally delivered at ceremonies marking the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research—began by situating his problem *vis-à-vis* the approach of the older Critical Theory. The latter had pointed to the relation between

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the social processes and the formation of ego identity. However, it was asserted that the socialization of capitalist society has gone so far that the notion of an individual ego no longer makes sense. To this degree, the revisionist psychoanalysts' sociologization of Freud is an adequate reflection of social reality, for the ego as such no longer exists. Such an ego as is said to have disappeared was, however, the autonomous ego of classical German philosophy. And though they bemoaned its death, the older Critical Theorists nonetheless based their theory upon its normative structure. It thus appears that their theory is either the last gasp of a dying culture of which they are the final survivors; or, as Habermas puts it, that they have developed "a left counterpart to the theory of totalitarian domination."

Habermas' concern over the years has been to develo an empirically groundable, scientifically testable Critical Theory. The attempt of "Moral Development and Ego Identity" fits this project in a twofold sense. First, taking off from the proposals of Loevinger (Chart 1, which belongs on page 46, line 19), and then turning to those of

STAGES OF EGO DEVELOPMENT
ACCORDING TO JANE LOEVINGER*

CHART 1

Stage	Impulse control and character development	Interpersonal style	Conscious preoccupation
Presocial Symbiotic		Autistic Symbiotic	Self vs. nonself
Impulse ridden	Impulse ridden, fear of retaliation	Exploitive, dependent	Bodily feelings, especially sexual and aggressive
Opportunistic	Expedient, fear of being caught	Exploitive, manipulative, zero-sum-game	Advantage control
Conformist	Conformity to external rules, shame	Reciprocal, superficial	Things, appearance, reputation
Conscientious	Internalized rules, guilt	Intensive, responsible	Differentiated inner feelings, achievements, traits
Autonomous	Coping with inner conflict, toleration of difference	Intensive concern for autonomy	Ditto, role conceptualization, development, self-fulfillment
Integrated	Reconciling inner conflicts, renunciation of unattainable	Ditto, cherishing of individuality	Ditto, identity

*Source: Jane Loevinger, "The Meaning and Measurement of Ego Development," *American Psychologist* 21:3 (March, 1966), p. 198.

Kohlberg (Chart 1a and 2, both belonging on page 47), Habermas assures himself of empirical materials. The juxtaposition of Loevinger and Kohlberg permits him also to point to the role of theoretical considerations in the elaboration of empirical theory. More importantly, Habermas' analysis puts him in a position to deal with the question, "Who is the critical theorist, and from what standpoint does he or she criticize?" It is this latter question that motivates Habermas' article, giving it its political thrust (in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the demonstration of a seventh stage beyond Kohlberg's sixth; and in the integration of the problem of motivation into that of cognitive, or moral development).

"Moral Development and Ego Identity" reasserts Habermas' place in the Frankfurt tradition at the same time that it reflects the specificity of his own advances. The question running through both the old and new versions of Critical Theory is that of the reconciliation of freedom and happiness, and its corollary, the dialectic of the conquest of external nature coupled with the increasing subjection of internal nature. The development of a conception of individual freedom which couples the sociality of the individual and a consideration for the constraints of external and internal nature entails a moving beyond the traditional notion of autonomy, to whose paradoxical limits Adorno's lifework points. That notion of autonomy cannot, however, simply be

STAGES OF MORAL CONSCIOUSNESS
ACCORDING TO LAWRENCE KOHLBERG*

CHART 1A

Obedience and punishment orientation	Egocentric deference to superior power or prestige, or a trouble-avoiding set. Objective responsibility.	I Preconventional level
Instrumental hedonism	Right action is that instrumentally satisfying the self's needs and occasionally those of others. Naive egalitarianism and orientation to exchange and reciprocity.	
Good-boy orientation	Orientation to approval and to pleasing and helping others. Conformity to stereotypical images of majority or natural role behavior, and judgment by intentions.	II Conventional level
Law and order orientation	Orientation toward authority, fixed rules, and the maintenance of the social order. Right behavior consists of doing one's duty, showing respect for authority, and maintaining the given social order for its own sake.	
Contractual legalistic orientation	Right action is defined in terms of individual rights and of standards which have been initially examined and agreed upon by the whole society. Concern with establishing and maintaining individual rights, equality, and liberty. Distinctions are made between values having universal, prescriptive applicability and values specific to a given society.	III Postconventional level
Universal-ethical-principle orientation	Right is defined by the decision of conscience in accord with self-chosen ethical principles appealing to logical comprehensiveness, universality, and consistency. These principles are abstract; they are not concrete moral rules. These are universal principles of justice, of the reciprocity and equality of human rights, and of respect for the dignity of human beings and individual persons.	

*Source: Elliot Turiel, "Conflict and Transition in Adolescent Moral Development," in *Child Development* 45 (1974), pp. 14-29.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EXPLANATION OF THE STAGES OF MORAL CONSCIOUSNESS (KOHLBERG)*

CHART 2

Cognitive Presuppositions	Stages of moral consciousness	Idea of the good and proper life	Sanctions	Range
IIa Concrete-operational Thought	1. punishment-obedience orientation 2. instrumental hedonism	1. maximization of pleasure through obedience 2. maximization of pleasure through exchange	Punishment (deprivation of physical rewards)	natural and social environment (undifferentiated)
IIb Concrete-operational Thought	3. good-boy orientation 4. law and order orientation	3. concrete morality through gratifying interaction 4. concrete morality of an internalized normative system	Shame (deprivation of love and social recognition)	primary reference to persons or groups members of the political community
III Formal-operational Thought	5. social-contractual legalism 6. ethical-principle orientation	5. civil liberty and public welfare 6. moral freedom	Guilt (reaction of the conscience)	citizenship as such private persons as such

Source: Lawrence Kohlberg, "From Is to Ought," in Theodore Mischel, ed., *Cognitive Development and Epistemology* (New York, 1971), Table I, Definition of Moral Stages.

CHART 3

Universal Components of Communicative Action					Role Behavior Characteristics		
Cognitive presupposition	Communi-level	Level of action	Behavior motivation	Actor	Reflexivity	Norm controlling behavior	Generalization
Pre-operational thought	incomplete interaction	concrete actions and their consequences	generalized desire/aversion	natural identity	to understand and obey expectations on behavior	to express and fulfill intentions of actions	to perceive concrete action and actors
I Concrete Thought	complete interaction	roles, normative systems	culturally interpreted needs	role-identity	reflexive expectations of behavior to understand and follow norms	distinction between what should be and what is wanted (duty/desire)	distinction between actions and norms; individual subjects and performers
II Formal Thought	communicative action and discourse	principles	competing interpretations of need	ego-identity	to understand and apply reflexive norms (principles)	distinction between heteronomy and autonomy	distinction between particular and general norms; between individuality and ego as such

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rejected, abstractly negated. Habermas' proposal here seems to be the *social* reformulation of that notion, based however on a logic of cognitive development accounting for the process of individuation which itself is integrated into a logic of moral—hence social, and finally political—development. This project is all the more complex as, typically, Habermas attempts to synthesize a variety of approaches, from psychoanalysis to systems-theory, from cognitive psychology to social-interactionism. This complexity makes the charts all the more important.

Two specifically Habermasian developments are pointed to in his article. The first is the role of language, the necessity of a theory of communicative activity, ultimately, a universal pragmatics. Chart 3 (which belongs on page 48) shows the multi-leveled implication of Habermas' problematic. The first four vertical columns of this chart deal with the conditions for intersubjective activity in general, according to the cognitive development of the actor(s) in question. The last three vertical columns (to which reference should have been made on line 10 of page 50) show the transition which makes not simply moral consciousness possible, but more importantly, which permits the move to the pragmatic dimension by means of the specification of what in fact a moral conflict is. This gives rise to Chart 4 (which belongs on page 51, lines 31-31: the sentence beginning "If this is so" should follow reference to Chart 4).

ROLE COMPETENCE AND STAGES OF MORAL CONSCIOUSNESS

CHART 4

Age level	Level of Communication		Requisite Reciprocity	Stages of moral consciousness	Idea of the Good Life	Range	Philosophical Reconstruction	Age level
I	actions and their consequences	generalized desire/aversion	incomplete reciprocity	1	maximum pleasure/minimum unpleasantness through obedience	natural and social environment		IIa
			complete reciprocity	2	ditto through exchange		naive hedonism	
II	Roles	culturally interpreted needs (concrete duties)	incomplete reciprocity	3	concrete morality of primary groups	groups of primary reference persons		IIb
	Norm systems			4	concrete morality of secondary groups	membership in political community	thought according to ordered rules	
III	Principles	universalized desire/aversion (uses)	complete reciprocity	5	civil liberties, public welfare	all as citizens	rational natural law	III
		universalized duties		6	moral freedom	all humans as private persons	formalistic ethic	
		universalized interpretation of need		7	moral and political freedom	all as members of a fictitious world society	universal linguistic ethic	

What emerges clearly in these passages is that Habermas' concerns with communicative competence and ultimately with a universal pragmatics demand for their cogency the development of a *theory of evolution*. Such a demand is, as Habermas notes, foreign to the *ethos* of the older Frankfurt School, who justly fear the closure of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their theory into a totality which becomes a totalitarianism. Nonetheless, the work with empirical problems shows Habermas the immanent need for such a theory; and his task becomes its formulation in a manner that avoids the idealist closure. In the particular case at hand, such a theory is necessary to redeem the claim of Kohlberg, as well as to show its incompleteness and the necessity of its transcendence to the political sphere (stage 7 of Chart 4). Moreover, the theory of cognitive evolution is not imposed from without; its immanent necessity appears sharply in the fifth vertical column of chart 3, which demonstrates the emergence of a reflexivity immanent to the development of role competence. This reflexivity then serves as the immanent justification of the interrelated, hierarchically articulated stages to which Habermas points. It implies that there is a *leap*, a gap whose appearance does *not* have a *natural* necessity and need not occur nor be maintained.

Habermas' theory of evolution here avoids the idealistic totalization by means of its appeal to psychoanalytic categories. In sketching the six commonalities of developmental ego-theory, he notes on the one hand the irreversibility of the sequence, while on the other he insists on their discontinuity and their crisis-like development. In the last part of the article (52ff.), he takes up the problem of motivation in this context. The too brief reference to narcissism and the defense mechanisms would seem to imply the need to join together the notion of reflexion with that of the crisis-like leap to new stages of personal ego organization. Here, he can return to the problem of nature (internal and external) within the communicative context. A passage obscured by a printing error, as well as a mistranslation, needs to be cited: "At this stage, the inner nature need no longer be scrutinized within a natural interpretation frame fixed by cultural tradition, according to a *monologically* applied principle of universalization, in order then to be split into legitimate and illegitimate components, duties and inclinations. The inner nature is made communicatively *fluid* and transparent to the extent that needs can be linguistically preserved through aesthetic forms of expression or released from their paleo-symbolic, prelinguistic state" (page 54; terms italicized were mistranslated). The point is that the socialization of nature, as opposed to its monological treatment, as well as its being made fluid, do not eliminate the natural, nor pretend to make it one with the rational any more than the psychoanalyst could eliminate or rationalize the unconscious. Simply: the relation of the social actor to nature is no longer that of brute opposition nor of (transcendental) constitution. Implicit here, it seems to me, is Habermas' attempt to make room for content in that so-much-decried "perfect speech situation" which, to some, seems to be the goal of his political theory.

Here, the theory of evolution sketched in "Moral Development and Ego Identity" would have to be confronted with Habermas' Hegel Prize Speech, "Can Complex Societies Develop a Rational Identity?" The distinction of labor and interaction around which such debate has grown recently seems to be abandoned here, at first glance for a wholly interactionist perspective. The theory of cognitive development is indeed taken out of its monadic context and socialized, gaining a coherence and articulation which it had lacked. At the same time, the normativity to which critical theory must refer is grounded. Yet, as Habermas points out in his very first paragraph, this grounding in an ego organization claims to deal at once with culturally invariant problems of action, but does so through an "ego organization [that] is in no way regular, as it would be if it were the result of a natural process of maturation. . ." (41). Thus, it is the ego organization and not the "problems of action" which appear to vary in the scheme. It might be suggested that the reason for this development is that Habermas is returning to the labor-interaction problem at the point where he first

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

situated it, in Hegel's Jena Writings. There, Habermas suggested, Hegel had a triad of primal moments, labor-interaction-language, which later fused. In Habermas' own reconstruction, only labor and interaction figure, with language sometimes treated as instrumental, sometimes as interactional (cf. Richard Winfield in *Telos* 24, p. 126n). Perhaps here language is returning to its proper place?

This note is no place to attempt a conclusion, let alone a full-scale analysis of the present or new directions in Habermas' work. Let me conclude, instead, on a more traditional note, by correcting a mistranslation *vis-à-vis* Hegel, from whose problematic Habermas' work can never be separated: "A glance at the just illustrated divisions shows that the stages of universal role qualifications represent a continuity characterized by a logic of development. There either exists between higher and lower levels a relation of inclusion or between the lower and the higher a relation of differentiation or both (Hegel's concept of *Aufhebung*). The same would hold for the stages of moral consciousness, if these can be derived from the levels of role competence" (51).

Eleven Theses on Beethoven

by Maynard Solomon

-1-

Vienna: "Situation hopeless but not serious." In late Mozart, Haydn, early Beethoven are condensed the contradictory feelings of *fin-de-siècle* Viennese life: courtly grace penetrated by brusque and dissonant elements; meditative rationality mingled with the play-impulse; gaiety undermined by a sense of loss. Music into which flow the thwarted impulses of the Josephinian *Aufklärung*.

-2-

Renaissance notion of princely redemption enters music with Beethoven. Haydn's "Nelson" Mass of 1798 indicates that the idea was in the air, but Haydn was unable to visualize the hero apart from the cursive forms of religious music. The new element in Beethoven's model of heroism is the secularization of messianic striving. His vehicle: the sonata principle.

-3-

"To faith nothing is impossible" (Feuerbach). The "Eroica" Symphony: (archaic sources aside), the collision of faith in the savior-Prince with the Caesaristic reality of Bonapartism; a new awareness of the regressive, all-too-human components of forward-thrusting stages in social evolution. In the closing hours of the Enlightenment, faith is necessary, but insufficient. French Revolutionary art and music omitted both the Revolution and the Terror in favor of heroic portraiture and joyful rhetoric. The "Eroica" (formerly "Bonaparte") emerges from the war between belief and disbelief (Goethe) which dissolves ideology into history, pathology into art. "A clash of doctrine is not a disaster—it is an opportunity" (Whitehead). The survival power of art (Marx's "eternal charm") rises from an original fantasy of transcendence, later collectivized, subverted but not superseded by doubt.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

-4-

"Last movements have always strained and sometimes eluded Beethoven's imagination" (Kerman). Beethoven never solved the problem of the portrayal of victory because he was always able to conceive and symbolize ever-more-powerful and destructive forces to be overcome.

-5-

"In the world of art, as in the whole of our great universe, *freedom and progress* are the main objectives" (Beethoven). "In the sphere of art, swamp and slime are of even more use to a man than all that damned nonsense!!!" (Beethoven). "Art belongs to two spheres: its roots are in the sphere of history, and its life is in the sphere of objective categories and values" (Max Raphael). "Nothing can be altered in the value of a cultural achievement by its being shown to have been derived from elementary animal instinctual sources" (Freud).

-6-

Music mediates between pain and pleasure and other extreme alternatives usually by picturing the absence of pain, by denial. Beethoven, recognizing the reality-principle, proceeds through temporary endurance of pain "on the long and circuitous road to pleasure" (Freud). In the heroic period, where his central theme is the conquest of tragedy, his method consists of the introduction of previously forbidden elements. In music before Beethoven, grace and peace were portrayed as already present rather than as states to be attained. Now, destructiveness, anxiety and aggression are transcended within the work of art rather than by the work of art. The intrusion of hostile energy raises the possibility of failure.

-7-

The auditory sphere is "the nucleus of the super-ego" (Isakower), accessible to the verbal prohibitions and imperatives of authority. The benevolent God dwells within the heart; the God of wrath enters through the "open," receptive sense of hearing. "In the church of God nothing is demanded but hearing" (Luther). The ear is "the organ of terror" (Feuerbach). The only sounds which Beethoven could tolerate were those of his own creation, sounds purged of terror through their organization into harmonious, bound, Utopian structures.

-8-

The dissolution of the heroic style; Napoleon and Beethoven in exile. The Viennese, after twenty years of war, began to utilize music to veil the minimutive reality of post-Enlightenment existence. They had added new delicacies to their diet of brown beer and sausages and were beginning the great Biedermeier descent into the mountain of *Schlage* which hid the inadequacies and frustrations of Viennese life from the consciousness of its citizens. Emergent hedonist trends and a turn to sensuous Italian music and idealized dance forms resulted in the loss of an audience for music which dealt in categorical imperatives and was of an ascetic and conflict-ridden character. Freed from patronage, lacking collaborators, Beethoven searches for an unprecedented style, whose tendencies and formative materials are not identifiable in the music of his contemporaries or immediate predecessors.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

-9-

"An die ferne Geliebte:" the pivotal work inaugurating the last style, bidding farewell to Beethoven's marriage project, to romantic pretense, to heroic grandiosity. The turn from motivic condensation to the elaboration of the vocal impulse. Engangled with his nephew and sister-in-law, Beethoven touches regions of human experience from which he had hitherto been excluded by the frozen patterns of his bachelor's existence. The last barrier falls with Op. 106. The distant beloved remains on the horizon of possibility.

-10-

With the Ninth Symphony, the anachronistic (prophetic) Enlightenment model returns. "Alle Menschen werden Brüder." The triumphal resolution is clearly in future tense, with a hint of the imperative.

-11-

At the end: "Hymn of Thanksgiving of an invalid on his convalescence. A sense of new strength and reawakened feeling" (Beethoven). Music is the agency of healing, of man's conceivable reconciliation with history, nature, and the primal images of his childhood. The late works are the elaboration of the infinite possibilities of transcendence, the multiplicity of provisional solutions to the inevitability of tragedy. Heroic surrogates yield to the real individual, who must make his own history and accept the conditions of his personal ancestry and mortality. "Der schwer gefasste Engschluss" (Beethoven).

socialist Revolution

In our current issue (no. 28):

Harry Chotiner: The American Revolution and the Bicentennial

Louis Menashe: The Problem of Solzhenitsyn

David Fernbach: Toward a Marxist Theory of Gay Liberation

SOCIALIST REVOLUTION
AGENDA PUBLISHING COMPANY
396 SANCHEZ STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94114

Subscription (6 issues) $10 Foreign subscription $11
Single issue $2
James Weinstein's *Ambiguous Legacy:* $3 with subscription.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

REVIEWS:

Michael Schneider. *Neurosis and Civilization: A Marxist-Freudian Synthesis.* Translated by Michael Roloff. New York: Seabury Press, 1975. 302 pages.

Michael Schneider's prodigiously uneven book is, at the very least, timely.

The revival of interest in Marx and Freud could scarcely have been predicted here a generation ago, beclouded as the question had become by the cold war and medical orthodoxy. Yet the inherently critical power of Freud's thought was bound to become drawn into the rejuvenation of Marxism which has taken place in recent years. For it was Freud who raised many of the questions that Marxism had neglected and now had to confront. The fact that psychoanalysis was a theory-praxis of the personal, subjective world capable of undermining the moral legitimacy of bourgeois relations could not remain lost on radical thinkers. Nor, however, could they overlook the associated fact, that the critical edge of psychoanalysis was sheathed in an affirmation of those same bourgeois relations that were being relentlessly scrutinized. This ambivalent stance of psychoanalysis—what Schneider refers to as its "combinative character"—has presented Left thought with a problematic capable of diverse solutions, from outright rejection of Freud to uncritical embrace, and with all stops between. Schneider's work is by no means the first, nor will it be the last of these ventures. But it is one of the most remarkable, since it posits the essential value of Freudian thought for Marxism without for one moment letting psychoanalysis interfere with the primacy of the Marxist critique. It is Freud who has to bend instead —or, rather, since Schneider embraces the dialectic, Freud who has to be retained; destroyed and "raised to a higher level." It is an annealed psychoanalysis that Schneider, with hammer and tong, ventures to present to us, a psychoanalysis fit for Marxism; in short, Freud historicized.

In accordance with its dialectical aim, *Neurosis and Civilization* has a triadic structure. In the first part, "with Freud against vulgar Marxism," the project is to "retain" the moment of Freudian validity against vulgar Marxist attack, an onslaught which Schneider equates, somewhat facilely, with Stalinism. Included in this section is a competent rendition of the critique of Reich (*de rigeur* for Marx-Freud works) along with a useful commentary on Stalinist orthodoxy. Schneider then turns to part two, the "destruction" phase, "With Marx against the Bourgeois Ideology of Psychoanalysis." Here he hauls out his heavy wrecking equipment for the job of smashing the bourgeoisifications within psychoanalytic theory and therapeutic practice. Then, surrounded with the rubble of Freudian thought in its bourgeois guise, Schneider proceeds to his third section, "The Utilization of Capital and Psychic Impoverishment, or Society as Illness." Here he undertakes the phase of reconstruction, or raising psychoanalysis to the higher level, first with a central theoretical chapter, "On the Pathology of the Capitalist Commodity Society;" then with extended critiques of the pathology of work and consumption respectively; and finally, with some reflections on the "task of a subversive, materialistically guaranteed psychoanalysis" and the role of youth culture in the revolutionary movement. The book closes with an appendix on the Frankfurt School, whose point is made in the subtitle, "Cooperation between Marxism and Psychoanalysis at the Expense of Marxism." That this is an appendix and not, as it was originally written, a transition between Parts Two and Three, is a decision of the translator, Michael Roloff—a rather unfortunate one, it would seem to me, since the appendix clarifies Schneider's ideological ground in the actual debate on the Marx-Freud question in a way that

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would have enhanced a reading of Part Three, especially to those not familiar with the German arena.

Although *Neurosis and Civilization* is somewhat cramped by a Teutonic style (the lineaments of which can be glimpsed in the chapter headings), it is on the whole a clearly articulated, thorough and comprehensive work. Schneider evidently lacks first-hand experience of psychoanalysis, but he has read widely and quoted extensively from those who have. It should be added that he appears to be invincibly ignorant of the actual historical structure of the psychoanalytic movement, quite obtusely and unfairly confusing it, for example, with official *psychiatry*—an institution which has often been bitterly hostile to Freud—as an agent for the oppression of mental patients. In one passage he even uses the phrase, "custodial psychoanalysis" (204). Nonetheless the central thrust of his critique is a necessary starting point for any Marx-Freud study.

Plainly, Freud's discovery of the unconscious opened up new territory for Marxism essential for grasping the social process in both its liberatory and oppressive moments. However, by couching psychoanalytic theory in ultimately ahistorical and biological terms, Freudians tended to seal it off from appropriation by Marxism. The biological immutability of an instinctual dialectic emerges from abstraction on the plane of social phenomena as the immutability of the patriarchal family or of 'penis-envy,' or money as the search for body contents, and so forth—in short, as typical bourgeois mystifications, substituting nature for history. To set psychoanalysis on its feet, then, one has to historicize the instinctual dialectic. So far, so good.

For Schneider, to historicize Freud is to introduce directly the critique of political economy into psychoanalysis. The fact that as he writes, "Freud discovered a world that could not be contained in the categories of political economy" (6) does not deter him—although, as we shall see, it would have been better if it had. For he claims that, read properly, the fundamental principles of Marxism *already* contain those of the subjective world: "The 'renunciation' and 'repression' of sensuality results (sic) from the exchange principle itself...it is already embedded in a (capitalist) commodty economy" (55).

The dynamic by which the exchange principle effects the "repression" of sensuality is the universalization of the mode of abstraction within capitalism. Necessary, as Marx showed, for the creation and expropriation of labor-power, abstraction is the real form as well of that loss of content with the infantile body which was the heart of Freud's discovery. " 'Abstract man,' who is the personification of 'abstract human labor,' has just as abstract a relationship to his own sensuality as to the sensuality of use value. The abstraction of commodity and money and the disqualification and disrealization (sic) which it effects of the entire world of usable things are therefore the materialistic foundation of that psychic 'process of abstraction' which Freud described with the concept of 'repression'." Freud's concept of repression is but the "intrapsychic sedimentation" of this "historical process" (127).

We shall have more to say below of the logic embedded within these propositions. First, however, let us consider how Schneider elaborates his central thesis. The argument proceeds by analogy with Marx's reasoning concerning the fetishism of commodities. As the fetish-form necessarily involves an imposed unconsciousness whereby the real social relation is screened off by the abstract money-form, so does the Freudian unconscious involve a similar abstraction. "An exchange abstraction as 'real abstraction' enters the exchangers' consciousness as little as its psychological complement, 'repression,' enters the consciousness of the repressing subject" (127).

To secure his historicization, Schneider is compelled to specify that the processes of repression and abstract exchange have the same historical span, i.e., capitalism. By

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the same argument, in precapitalist days, when, despite domination and renunciation, men produced for use rather than exchange, instincts were not abstracted and hence not repressed. "On the level of the antique, that is, feudal *nautral* economy, social instinctual needs were also still immediately attached to use values and therefore had just as particular, concrete, and qualitative a character as natural-economic work itself" (128). Thus what Freud discovered, psychoanalysis, "is *only* [italics mine] the science of the pseudo-nature of bourgeois man" (52). Furthermore, as such a science, it could only comprehend the nature of proletarian life "insofar as the proletariat itself was bourgeois. Indeed psychoanalysis was unsuited to grasp the psychology of the proletariat, which is determined by the capitalist production process..." (42).

For Schneider, then, the emphasis on the family as the matrix of socialization misses what is really crucial: the production process. True, there are ample obeisances throughout the book as to the importance of family and childhood, i.e., those mediations toward which psychoanalysis pointed as the source of what was subjectively critical. But a reader cannot escape the impression that Schneider's conceptual heart is with the production and, to a lesser extent, consumption of commodities as the key determinants. At times he goes to grotesque lengths to make the point, even blaming schizophrenia on capitalism: " 'schizophrenogene' consciousness is nothing else but destroyed, or impeded, class consciousness" (200).

To be sure, Schneider's pronouncements on schizophrenia, or mental disturbance in general, are marked by a kind of patchwork confusion that would have persuaded a more prudent author to hold his peace. I have not been able to figure out, in this regard why he—or was it the translator?—feels compelled to follow repeatedly the word "neurotic" with the phrase, "that is, psychotic." But one should not be distracted by weaknesses in detail. That Schneider can write positive nonsense at times will be clear to whomever reads his book. But this does not mean he is to be lightly dismissed. For he has called attention to certain realities which psychology has preferred to forget, in particular that alienation in the work process is also maddening, and that new neurotic structures arise as capital twists the forms of its mystification in consumption and production. If nothing else, Schneider convincingly reminds us that a psychology which does not take actively into account the fact that defense processes also occur extrapsychically through the workings of the exchange principle is both unscientific and politically backward.

In this respect the deeper flaws of Schneider's work are especially regrettable, as they will provide a pretext for ignoring what he has achieved and will strengthen the hand of those who believe in subjectivist solutions. There is, however, a brighter side, although it is not one for which Schneider might be expected to feel enthusiasm. And this is that, by pursuing its thesis to a *reductio ad absurdum, Neurosis and Civilization* succeeds in demonstrating once again that political economy is both right—as a critique of bourgeois institutions—and wrong—as a vision of the totality. By his remorseless and dogmatic use of the critique of political economy, Schneider reveals the limits not only of the traditional interpretations of Freud, but also Marx. Thus a look at Schneider's failings might help establish some ground for a fresh start.

The first thing that will have to go is the easy promise of "synthesis" offered by *Neurosis and Civilization* in its subtitle. One thing is clear from this book: it is not a synthesis to attempt to stuff Freud into a Marxist bag, just as it would not be a synthesis to stuff Marx into a Freudian bag. In either case, the bag breaks and the contents spill into confusion.

To achieve a synthesis, it does not suffice to label Freud "valuable" and then to find

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

various parallels within political economy which are automatically substituted for Freudian dynamisms according to the reflex judgment that the "base" is more vital than the "superstructure." This sort of formalism only ironically confirms Schneider's thesis that abstraction is a form of mystification. No, it is necessary to spell out rather specific and concrete mediations according to which Freud's subjective findings can become intelligible in the light of history, and *vice versa*. But Schneider scarcely does this. Instead he regales us with explanations which say that the "ultimate" cause of social life, the class struggle, can replace mediations. What emerges is not dialectical but another variety of the passive reflectivity which dogs the steps of bourgeois thought. Thus, because modern work is fragmented, "it is no longer possible to create an integration of partial psychic functions... There reproduces itself in the psychic apparatus a 'similar rational-inhuman dibvision of labor as was found in the factory' (Lukács), namely, the dissection of the psychosexual totality...into individual partial functions... The 'psychic impoverishment' of the weakened and ill ego...is therefore the adequate psychological reflex of the 'impoverishment of the workers of their individual productive energies,' which is determined by the 'enrichment of the total worker, that is, of capital with social productive power' (Marx). Regarded this way, industrial pathology is the materialist foundation of the 'psychopathology of [capitalist] everyday life' (Freud)" (173).

But "regarded this way" is the way of "reflex" self-reproduction: a simple mirroring of reality in the mind. Aside from being utterly foreign to everything Freud ever proposed, notions of this kind only "reproduce" within Marxism its tendency towards objectification: in psychological terms, a repressive behaviorism. Indeed Schneider all too often ends up sounding like the Stalinist he so effectively denounces in the early part of his essay. His personal politics are not at issue here. The point is that it is not possible to transcend behaviorist discourse within the terms of political economy as they have been construed so far.

As is so often the case, Marxism and Marx are not precisely the same thing. In the Preface to the first German edition of *Capital*, Marx removes himself from the debate with the realization that his work, at least as it had evolved up to that time, was limited in its psychological application. It is a point Schneider could well have heeded:

"To prevent possible misunderstanding, a word. I paint the capitalist and the landlord in no sense *couleur de rose*. But here individuals are dealt with only in so far as they are the personifications of economic categories, embodiments of particular class-relations and class-interests. My standpoint, from which the evolution of the economic formation of society is viewed as a process of natural history, can less than any other make the individual responsible for relations whose creature he socially remains, however, much he may subjectively raise himself above them."

A review could confine itself to this one passage, as it is plain that Schneider does not understand the difference between a personification and a person. But the problematic *Neurosis and Civilization* advances is too important for such short shrift. Indeed, Schneider is absolutely correct in stressing that it is a critical one for Marxism itself. But if it is critical, political economy will have to yield theoretical space to account for subjectivity. Schneider cannot—to use an image redolent with Marxist as well as Freudian implications—have his cake and eat it too. Indeed, the attempt to conserve political-economic categories at all costs congeals into a simplistic model of class and history itself. The costs are too high, not merely for the problematic of Marx and Freud, but for the analysis of contemporary society. One would think, in reading this work, that the world was still divided neatly into a few classes according to the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

relations of production, and that the industrial proletariat is still waiting in the wings as the definitive revolutionary agent. That class structure has itself been changed by the very forces whose psychological imprint Schneider is concerned to analyse is at the same time recognized and ignored in these pages. Schneider appreciates, for instance, that the further development of the commodity form has altered the spheres of consumption and work, and with them, psychological structure. But the reality that the class dynamic itself of late capitalist society has been altered by these very changes —plus associated others, which are not discussed, such as bureaucratization—is lost on him. Despite overwhelming evidence that the historical dialectic is being played out in a fundamentally more complex way, Schneider persists in chasing the chimera of a personified bourgeois *vs.* a personified worker as the modular unit out of which all social explanations are to be constructed. Such discourse is no synthesis but a hodgepodge.

In his relentless historicization Schneider yokes Freud to the bourgeoisie: "only" the science of the pseudo-nature of bourgeois man. And the proof of this? None other than that old chestnut: Freud only treated bourgeois patients, ergo, he could not hope to derive valid general propositions about psychology from his data. This would be simply laughable were it not so grandly elaborated. The next step in the historicization of psychoanalytic categories is to pass off the problem of aggression as "only reflect[ing] the dog-eat-dog law of capitalist competition" (67). Further, since Freud was doubtlessly wrong when he ascribed the Oedipus complex to a singular real event in prehistory, Schneider feels entitled to redefine the whole business as "the murder of the father which the Oedipal child commits symbolically in the bourgeois patriarchal family" (64). The conclusions to which we are led by these sublime specimens of logic are that Attila the Hun was a capitalist and Sophocles, a bourgeois writer. The sloppiness of Schneider's thinking about the historical dialectic is matched only by the dogmatic rigidity with which he relies on "authorities" to patch up the holes in his reasoning: e.g., the "long-known ethnological investigations and discoveries of Bachofen, Morgan and Engels regarding the primal communistic matriarchal societies" (65), as though these important but outdated contributions could in themselves lend support to preposterous claims. Indeed, I do not recall ever reading a book in which the phrase, "according to..." was used so promiscuously in lieu of serious conceptual or empirical analysis.

Schneider's roundhouse punches thus end up glancing harmlessly off psychoanalysis. Insofar as they have any impact it is not on psychology itself, but on its bourgeois fetishization—psychologism, the illusion that mental processes are in themselves explanatory, or that subjective change alone will suffice. Schneider compares this attitude with the historically previous "religious reflex," which Marx found to be the displacement of earthly authority to the heavens. With the delegitimation of religion and the rise of the scientific mystique, this religion reflex is, so to speak, internalized and lends excessive value to mental categories. The idea is not original but it is an important one, especially for the critique of fetishism within the psychotherapies, and for the convergence of modern religion and psychology, as in "Humanist Psychology."

However valuable this critique, it does no more than hint at the historicization of Freud—nor, indeed, at the equally necessary restoration of subjective territory to Marxism. In order to tackle this problem, however, a theoretical point of entry has to be established.

The question may be concretely put. If it is manifestly absurd that aggression or the Oedipus complex began with capitalism, yet also the case that psychological entities of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

this sort are not simply biological but undergo historical transformation, then we must find a kind of discourse which permits this reality to be explained. The answer to the dilemma does not lie in the specification of another historical entity, such as, for example, patriarchy, within which the phenomenon may be said really to arise. Though patriarchy would be a more apt *bearer* of aggression and the Oedipus complex than capitalism (since both Attila and Sophocles were, if nothing else, the products of a patriarchal order), it would still not explain the origin of these formations, nor their subsequent development, without getting trapped in an infinite regress. Engels had a fling at just this kind of explanation in *The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*. There he put patriarchy into the explanatory reach of historical materialism by referring it to the struggle over ownership of the social surplus. Schneider would no doubt agree with his line of reasoning, and that it is no mean argument is revealed by the fact that Sophocles himself did not merely concoct the Oedipal configuration out of legend or dream, but from real life experiences which culminated in being sued by his sons for control of his property on grounds of "imbecility" (he won the case, according to Cicero, by reading *Oedipus at Colonus* to the jury!).[1] Nonetheless, Engels' argument foundered, just as Schneider's does, on the inability of historical materialism to appropriate psychological categories in a workable dialectic. It is never considered, for example, why people would fight over a surplus; more important, when Engels does indicate psychological relations, he gives the argument away and falls into a kind of naïve Freudianism. Writing of the supposedly superior, pre-class society of the Iroquois, Engels observes that "this organization was doomed to extinction" because, while it obtained within the tribe, it did not prevent each tribe from slaughtering the other in warfare "waged with the cruelty that distinguishes man from all other animals and which was abated only later in self-interest."[2]

The inability to contain psychological formations in any purely historical scheme has led many, including Juliet Mitchell,[3] into a structuralist framework. This is not the place to take up the problem of structuralism, except to echo Schneider's verdict that it takes too much away from history and leaves us ultimately with a static, synchronic vision in which a socialist imperative fades into obscurity. The trouble with the structuralist hypothesis is that it contains an immanent replacement for as well as a rejection of history. Hence it too is implicitly historicized—and in the wrong way. What we seek instead as the domain upon which psychological qualities can be registered is the *transhistorical*—i.e., that which enters into each historical formation and is contained within all of them, yet exhausted by none of them, nor fully accounting for any. We do not mean something biological here, although, for all its flaws, Freud's biological hypothesis of instinctual drive served to suggest some of the qualities of the transhistorical. But the instinct hypothesis was cursed with being too severed from history. As such it provided fertile soil for the various bourgeois mystifications Schneider documents as the bugbears of psychoanalysis.

There is, in my opinion, only one domain capable of fulfilling a transhistorical function: that of representation itself, or, put another way, the imagination. Schneider is so concerned with differentiating himself from post-Adorno Frankfurt School efforts to water down Marxism in the name of representation, that he fails to recognize that here lies the only chance for mediation between Marx and Freud. And

1. Quoted in George Rosen, *Madness in Society*, (New York), 1968, p. 122.
2. Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, (New York, 1968), p. 529
3. *Psychoanalysis and Feminism*, (New York, 1974).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it is only as a mediation that representation should be used, not as a substantial cause, which would be, as Schneider fears, to secretly install psychology as the ultimate level of explanation. But we have seen already how little at home Schneider is with the notion of mediation, and how in consequence his thought becomes lumpy and burdened with false dichotomies, and so need inquire no further as to his limits in this area. In any case, it is the capacity to pretend, to conceive of and believe in what is not there, and to attempt to make it become there which characterizes the human throughout history; that, as well as the need to render into a unification what does not manifestly belong together, such as dream and reality, or infantile and adult modes of thought. The dialectic of the imaginary constitutes the mediation between subjective and objective worlds, and gives each of them a twist around the forms of the other. Observe that the concept of representation here advanced is intrinsically neither subjective nor objective, but depends upon the activity which relates the one to the other. Hence it contains the notion of praxis. Indeed the distinction between object and subject themselves—which split is the decisive event of history—emerges from representation-as-praxis, the generation of the imaginary in the search for the real and the real in the search for the imaginary.

If the universalized exchange principle has made a difference in the endless cycle of domination such that recognizably Freudian qualities should come to be associated specifically with the capitalist era—and this is, after all, what Schneider really claims, however he may distort it—it is only because the objective phantoms of the political-economic world come to represent the subjective phantoms of the personal world, and *vice versa*. The existence of this link is shown with special vividness in virtually every psychoanalysis when the time comes for the transaction of the bill. Then all the infantile fantasies that cluster about the symbol of money—its representation of feces, of the phallus, of the breast, of babies, etc.—become super-charged with the energy of reality, the entire history of the domination of labor which lies behind the abstract universal commodity form. One senses something of the history of capitalism being replayed in these encounters.

It is useless to do as Schneider does, and argue that the real problem behind all this is the domination of labor and the class struggle. Yes, that is the "real" problem, and insofar as action has to be taken in the objective world, it has to grasp the reality of the economic form. But the domination of labor power is a form which indeed lies "behind all this," i.e., the subject. Within the subject, reality is contained in the spontaneous mediations of personal life: the body, the family, sexuality, narcissism, and so forth. The subjective world—which is, after all, what Freud explored—does not come into existence via economic categories—but through the bodily reality of infantile life played out through attachment and separation from family members. And when it is replayed back into consciousness, such is the story which gets read. Critique will have to translate this discourse into the social categories to which it relates if it is not to get trapped in subjective immediacy. Nonetheless the language of the self which is to be translated remains in the original, humble version.

The above analysis may shed some light on the perpetual dilemma of base and superstructure, as well as some other problem areas within Marxism. Schneider's work can be seen as a consistent effort to demonstrate that since "psychoanalytic categories . . . were tied to the superstructure. . . a materialistically and psychoanalytically versed theory of illness, as we have sketched here, begins at the very 'basis' by showing that psychology becomes psychopathology to the degree that it is subsumed under the utilization process of capital, that is, becomes illness" (259). Insofar as his analysis fails, the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

failure must be regarded as that of the base-superstructure model. The rigid dichotomization of base vs. superstructure dissolves with the concept of representation as a transhistorical factor, and more particularly, in the Freudian vision of subjectivity. As soon as one turns from personifications to persons, one finds that what is "base" for society is "superstructure" for the individual. Similarly, what is basic for the individual is superfluous for society, in that no amount of purely personal alteration will dislodge history from its course.

The above complication does not mean that the critical approach to culture should be abandoned. In other words, law, morality, art, religion, etc., are not to be regarded *sui generis*, as bourgeois thought would have it, but as emergent from the conflict between hidden forces within the social totality. However, the nature of these forces -- which might be roughly considered "basic" -- must be considered in a different light. The "base" therefore is not the material production process, the objectification of which is a cultural phenomenon to be explained, and not the source of culture. It is instead the given state of the relations between subject and object; from another angle, the fission between the self and the world, dependent upon the dialectical development of each of these elements.

And the split cannot be healed by any material transformation of society. This does not imply that such material transformation is not necessary, only not sufficient to collapse subject into object. If it did, if, that is to say, a society emerged in which it was possible to describe adequately human relations from a materialistic base-superstructure vantage, then the liberatory goal of that revolutionary transformation will have been betrayed—as it was by Stalinism. To be more exact, neither Stalinism, behaviorism nor any other totalitarian version of society can succeed in eliminating the subject because the function of representation is not ideology but fact, developed through the universality of infantile life. However, insofar as it promotes an ideology of objectification, totalitarianism sustains its oppressiveness.

Marx's critique of political economy never proposed an ideology of objectification. However the fact that the domain of its critique was the objective world forced upon it certain categories, such as personifications, which are susceptible to objectification. In short, Marxism always stands in danger of being or taken by that which it criticizes. Marx begins *Capital* by stating that a commodity is that "object outside us, a thing that by its properties satisfies human wants of some sort or another. The nature of such wants, whether, for instance, they spring from the stomach or from fancy makes no difference."[4] He is claiming that insofar as we wish to grasp it as a commodity, especially with respect to its exchangeability, the thing has to be objectified. For this to happen a want has to be representable by a physical thing, since it is only such things that can be quantified and thus exchanged. But unless Marx can specify a want that cannot be represented by a material thing, he cannot ultimately demonstrate by means of his theory how people can shake off the commodity form through revolutionary praxis. So what is decisive for the critique of political economy turns out to hobble the theory of revolutionary activity. For this theory, it makes all the difference in the world whether the want springs from the stomach or "fancy." Although both types of wants need to be met by a revolution, it is only the latter which can generate *imaginary* objects, hence look beyond the given order. True, that order always attempts to recapture the imagination and herd it into the commodity form. It is around this struggle that much of the cultural history of late capitalism has been played out. But the intensity of the struggle places all the more demand on radical

4. Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, (New York, 1967), p. 35.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

social thought to come up with a critique of representation itself. And it is particularly urgent to include within this critique a means of differentiating between the countable —i.e., commodifiable—modes of representation and those which refuse to accept real mediation by the commodity form: that is to say, those which are unconscious, repressed and generated out of infantile sexuality.

Marx's critique presupposed the existence of a subject-object split prior to the processes of production and exchange, and traced the objectification which befell that split in the course of history. But an equivalent *subjectification* occurred dialectically alongside of this, as people, under the sway of domination, retreated into and elaborated the inner world. Freud picked up the story when this process, which has been germinating throughout history, reached such a level of contradiction in late capitalism that it became visible. Thus although psychoanalysis as a body of thought needs historicization, its greatest interest to radical theory lies precisely in its stubborn demonstration of mental strata that resist, or even defy, history. Here lies the adequate rooting of psychoanalysis in historical process. Adorno was right then: in Freud, only the exaggerations are true. Schneider's attempt to put Freud on his feet overlooks the missing piece of history for which Marxism has long been groping—the rebellion against history itself.

In order to pursue the above insight, a systematic conceptual analysis of psychoanalytic thought is necessary, one which distinguishes within Freudian thought between that are relatively trapped within history and those which become historical by resisting history. This is a matter which rarely gets considered by those who wish to appropriate psychoanalysis for radical social theory. Schneider's imperfect grasp of psychoanalysis prevents him from even beginning this task. And as might have been expected, his representation is cluttered with too much attention to what is most reified in psychoanalysis—the structural hypothesis of ego, id and superego, and a mechanistic instinct theory; conversely, it suffers from too little attention to those concepts which are intrinsically dialectical and transhistorical—repression and the dynamic unconscious. At a time when orthodox, apolitical Freudians are jettisoning metapsychology for being mechanistic, and returning to the roots of psychoanalysis in the realm of representation, Left theoreticians remain all too ready to accept the bourgeoisifications of metapsychological ego psychology as the heart and soul of Freudian thought. True, Schneider pays a lot of attention to "repression." But as was shown above he means this to be a reflection of the exchange principle, which itself moves on the level of objectifications. Once repression is located on the objective plane, there is no ground for differentiating between real behavior and the imaginary, and everything Freud introduced is rendered banal and uninteresting. Indeed, the reading becomes Adlerian, and not Freudian. This was of course the problem with Reich's interpretation of Freud, and it even dogged the steps of Marcuse and confused his analysis, as when, in the Introduction to *Eros and Civilization*, he held that he was using 'repression' and 'repressive' "in the non-technical sense to designate both conscious and unconscious, external and internal processes of restraint, constraint, and suppression."[5]

So Schneider is in good company; along with them, his analysis could be strengthened through a more penetrating use of the concept of representation. Consider what is one of the more valuable themes of his work, that the sphere of production enters decisively into emotional distress, what he calls mass "psychic impoverishment." In brief, work is hell and itself drives the worker crazy, just as much

5. Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization*, (New York, 1955), p. 7. .

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as does life within the family. Without the use of representation, this kind of analysis inevitably slips back into that of the non-specific "stress-syndrome" which characterizes bourgeois medicine in general and "industrial health" in particular. In other words, it becomes essentially quantitative and objectified: too much noise, boredom, "tension," or whatever. With the concept of representation, however, alienation on the job can be given a real psychological content by being considered in light of its *meaning*: its relationship to goals and intentions; and also, its inner symbolic linkage to the whole of an individual's life, in particular, to those bodily-based and "familiar" fantasies that form the phenomenological core of subjectivity, and which become so actively stirred up—and maddening—as a result of the worker's alienation and powerlessness. There is no need to artificially cleave any level from the other in the essential unity of subjective life. Nor, however, is there any need to collapse the level which arises from the productive process into that which stems from the body and the family. For the *objective* separation between these realms is only too real, being given by the actual history of capitalism with its relentless objectification. And postulating the centrality of the concept of representation need not be done "at the expense of Marxism," something which Schneider accuses the post-Adorno Frankfurt School of doing. The objective element of the representation is primarily given by the history and current nature of class society; moreover even its subjective element, for all that it lacks immediate political-economic content and is out of phase with current objective reality, was essentially determined in the first place by a family that owes its existence to the social collision between the historical and the transhistorical.

Schneider's confusion regarding the authentic domain of psychoanalysis costs him dearly just where his work could be of real value—in its critique of praxis. A fairly lengthy section on therapy, for example, makes some valid observations about the class loyalties of psychoanalysts; and then, as though this part of the truth sealed the fate of psychoanalysis as a therapy, proceeds to sink into a hysterical tirade against the evil ways in which psychoanalytic practice necessarily forces patients into conformism. This blathering becomes intelligible in light of Schneider's literalism and intolerance of the sphere of representation and the imagination. Thus, because the analytic situation, where the analyst is not supposed to reveal himself while the patient is, reproduces certain role distinctions in the family, it is held that the patient cannot get well unless he changes the analytic situation: "how is the analytic cure to emancipate him from a childhood attitude which is reinforced by the 'analytic situation'?" (102). That the analytic situation is controlled to permit the emergence of fantasy without the threat of real consequence seems utterly lost on him. Behind Schneider's insistence that the reality first be changed—that the analyst must be a real friend, or let the patient change the analytic situation, or stress the need for political-economic alteration rather than attend to the neurosis—he seems finally to be saying that the world of the imagination is too horrific and intractable to be comprehended.

Although the problem of therapy is relatively speaking a lesser one than the grand themes considered in this work, the particular attitude just touched upon has a wide implication. We may consider it in light of another of Schneider's complaints about therapy. "Therapeutic effect," he holds, "is produced by verbal expression only when it has practical material consequences in the life of the patient. What good is it to him if analysis brings a repressed hatred for his father back into his consciousnss without his being able to express his actual hatred, say, of his boss or his 'employer' (sic) because if he did he would be fired... What good is it to him if he cannot act out with

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his 'verbal assimilation' his newly won social insights?" (109). This passage betrays a fundamental confusion by assuming the interchangeability of the two hatreds. If this were so, then the accusations levelled by conservatives that radicals are essentially no more than parricides would be justifiable. That the two levels are not interchangeable is therefore a boon to Left politics, not, of course, by enabling it to escape the conservative critique (which counts for nothing more than sterile academic discourse), but because the subjective, infantile categories are not just destructive of the father but also fo the son. Remember, Oedipus blinded himself. The need to submit and be defeated is as ingrained in the Oedipus complex as is the wish to kill and triumph. Being mediations, they are not the direct cause of any practical position; but being unconscious, they have a greater chance of controlling behavior in a compulsive way. Since revolutionary action requires a precise and fluid estimation of the real situation, the persistence of unconscious needs for self-destruction (or their non-recognition, which comes to the same thing) is likely to have a devastating effect on Left praxis. And experience has amply borne this out.

The above is not a call for universal therapy but a call against the politics of "acting-out"—i.e., Left infantility. Schneider's inadequate grasp of subjectivity leads him to obliterate the distinction between conscious praxis and blind impulse. This is a legacy of his historicism, which forces him to cede too much to that class which has for so long dominated the organs of history, the bourgeoisie. Reading Schneider, one is led to think that the proletariat is not only neurotic insofar as it is bourgeois, but that it only comes to contain recognizably human individuals insofar as it is bourgeois. Consistent to the end in his folly, Schneider concludes his work with a call to dissolve the classic bourgeois ego, in favor of a "free association" of many individuals with "weak egos!" "The attributes of the classic bourgeois character structure, such as 'ego strength,' 'ego autonomy,' 'an ability to complete,' as 'subjective factors' can no longer be made the basis of political work" (270). This kind of heave-ho clears the decks of bourgeois rigidity, no doubt, but it also leaves the revolutionary bereft of the ability to make critical distinctions, or to resist immediate gratification in the interest of a long-range goal, or to exercise moral judgment, or to maintain fidelity in relationships. In short, it deprives people of the strength, will or intelligence to make a revolution. If we may cite one small favor for which to give thanks, it is that people are not such fools as Schneider makes them out to be.

Joel Kovel

Stefan Morawski, *Inquiries into the Fundamentals of Aesthetics.* M.I.T. Press, 1974. 408 pp.

For readers ignorant of Polish, this volume of essays by Stefan Morawski comes as a shock, as if a mountain had arisen in the front yard over night. Suddenly a decade of writing, and considerably more than a decade of thinking, is rendered into compact English, and we are confronted with a thoroughly elaborated aesthetic into which Morawski has integrated influences as diverse as analytic philosophy, Russian formalism, Prague linguistics, semiotics, theories of the avant garde, and Marxism. It

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would be more accurate to say that he has constructed a Marxist aesthetic which takes due account of these other modes of inquiry. By responding to views of art current in China, the Soviet Union, Latin America, as well as in Western Europe and the United States, he also takes account of the demands levied upon art in a world context, conflicting demands for cognitive or formal, moral or revolutionary qualities. Both the comprehensiveness of his theoretical grounding and the global scope of his references give to the book that mountainous solidity of which I spoke at the beginning.

Written between 1960 and 1970, with revisions and postscripts added in 1970-1972, the essays are grouped into three sections. The first examines basic axiological problems, including the definition of a work of art, the basis for aesthetic valuation, and the grounds for objectivity in aesthetic judgments. In the second section Morawski deals with particular artistic values, including expression mimesis, cognition, and the historically-grounded complex of values associated with socialist realism. In the final section, he considers the grounds for interpreting art as a social phenomenon which responds to collective experience and which aids us in our transformation of the world.

Morawski defines his own aesthetic stance in the opening chapter as one of "historicist relationism:" relationism, because it locates values in the exchange which takes place between subject (individual or collective) and object (the work of art); historicist, because it seeks to identify those artistic traits which have in fact been valued recurrently by various cultures. This stance he distinguishes from the other major modes of aesthetic valuation: from psychologism, which locates all value in the private aesthetic experience of the individual subject; from ontologism, which locates all value in the aesthetic object, independent of the experiencing subject; from ahistorical relationism, which ignores the social basis for both artistic form and experiential norms; and from sociological relativiem, which assumes that no easthetic values will attain pre-eminence among a variety of cultures over a prolonged period of time, but rather that they will continually shift, from period to period and place to place.

In the second chapter Morawski outlines four criteria which, he argues, have amerged historically as constants in the definition of art: (1) the work is "a structure of sensuously given qualities" (phonemes, tones, colors, shapes, etc.&; (2) this structure is "relatively autonomous," that is, the work forms a microcosm which is internally coherent and self-referential, even while it depends for genesis and meaning on macrostructures (social, psychological); (3) the work is an artifact, dependent upon human skill, either directly through personal crafting, or indirectly through machine production; and (4) the work is distinguished by "style," by "individual expression." This definition, which Morawski fleshes out and qualifies painstakingly, directs our attention to the formal qualities of the work, to its dependence upon external semiological systems, and to evidence of the artist's creative individuality. On all three counts, he enlarges the customary scope of Marxist aesthetics.

These criteria, Morawski insists, are empirical. They are not fixed eternal properties of art; indeed, in this century they have been subjected to frequent attacks, by dada and pop art, for example, or by the *nouveau roman*. Such transhistorical invariance as they have achieved has been due to the continuity of human praxis. In other words, Morawski argues that in the course of human development certain cultural invariants have emerged as solutions to recurrent life-problems, solutions which have taken the form of inherited skills, magical rites, verbal knowledge, as well as artistic conventions. As humankind mastered the external world, and ordered the internal world, through various modes of work, operating at all times from a biophysiological

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

makeup which has remained fairly constant, we evolved the relatively autonomous class of objects which we have called artistic; the fixed biological matrix, coupled with the recurrence of life-problems in various cultures, has led to the constancy in aesthetic criteria. This anthropological assumption, which Morawski shares with other Marxists, notably including Georg Lukács, Ernst Fischer, and of course Marx himself, enables him to treat art as a mode of praxis, a means of responding to and acting upon the world, alongside work and magic.

Because Morawski insists that our conception of art must be empirical, he remains open to new forms of art which challenge his model. In fact, one of his stated concerns is to determine how much of the transmitted European aesthetic heritage can withstand the assult raised against it by twentieth century avant garde art, and, conversely, to determine whether this new art expresses any of the recurrent features of past art. Throughout the essays, he is wrestling with dada, surrealism, pop and op art, conceptual art, aleatory music, action painting, and with technical developments such as computer composition and mechanical reproduction of artifacts: in short, with precisely those modern modes of art about which Marxists have had least to say. He offers a striking contrast in this respect to Lukács, whose aesthetic was grounded on conventional artistic forms, particularly those of the nineteenth century, and who therefore had little comprehension of avant garde products.

By insisting that aesthetic theory respond to artistic activity, Morawski upholds the Marxists belief in human creativity: "The function of artists is to transgress all definitions, which are provisional in any case and represent, necessarily, a transitional solution. Aesthetics should prove ready, above all, to integrate these new value-qualities into the field of values earlier recognized as fundamental" (120). Artists are trapped neither by their historical moment, nor by the inherited aesthetic forms, for they can invent new forms, new responses; they can envision possibilities which transcend those actually available in their place, in their time. We *do* require an author to be more than the stoneblind victim of the processes that engulf him; and if he is to master in imagination the events occurring around and including him, he must arrive at an interpretation that somehow *transcends* these processes" (234). This argument underlies Lukács' critique of modernism: the modernists, he claims, have given in to the alienated society, projecting this as the universal human condition, rather than imagining alternative modes of existence. Morawski likewise values that art more highly which transcends the conditions of alienation, but he shows more sympathy than Lukács (or Engels, or Lenin, or Plekhanov) showed for the difficulty of the task.

Morawski accordingly protests all dogmas which inhibit the artist's freedom to invent new forms. He defends the artist, for example, against Lenin's requirement, later enshrined in the official version of socialist realism, that all art be immediately accessible to the masses. "Much new and original art will be baffling, at least at first and to many (147)," he insists; but this is the necessary condition for aesthetic discovery. There is no way of erasing the conflict between the avant garde and an audience accustomed to previous artistic forms, except by legislating the avant garde out of existence, as the Soviet Union did in the 1930s, and as the Peoples' Republic of China has done more recently. Morawski devotes the whole of chapter 7 to a defense of art against the prescriptive version of socialist realism which emerged in Russia after 1934. When first elaborated in the 1920s, he argues, the theory of socialist realism articulated the principles implicit in the artistic renaissance which followed the Bolshevik Revolution. But by the mid-1930s, this theory had hardened into a dogma; instead of describing one fertile set of possibilities among many, it prescribed one and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

only one pattern. In general, Morawski insists, valid aesthetic theory must emerge in response to created works (Artistotle analyzing Attic drama), or else as part of the creative process (T.S. Eliot and Brecht explaining their own artistic practice). Once theory hardens into doctrine, especially if it serves the conservative interests of a controlling social group, it becomes crippling.

Bcause the artist responds to inherited forms as well as to historical circumstances, because he expresses his own idiosyncracies as well as generic human qualities, the work of art must be regarded as the product of both internal and external factors. The internal factors, which Morawski calls "idiogenetic," include stylistic imperatives within the medium, individual creativity, personal psychology. The external factors, which he calls "allogenetic," include the shared semantic fields (language, for example, for the writer), social experience, natural and manmade environment, modes of production, and so forth. By insisting that aesthetics attend to both dimensions, Morawski avoids the extremes of formalist or psychoanalytic theories, which tend toward the idiogenetic pole, and the extremes of sociological or reductive Marxist theories, which tend toward the allogenetic pole.

While appraising most highly the cognitive values inherent in art, Morawski also prizes the formal values which give us pleasure quite apart from any knowledge they might convey about the world. Once again he counters a common shortcoming of Marxist criticism—evident, for example, in Lukács, Plekhanov, and many of the left-wing critics of the thirties such as Christopher Caudwel—by insisting that we pay attention to the autotelic dimension of the work of art, the self-referential patterning as well as the pattern of references to the external world. The work is at once "transparent" and "opaque," disclosing a common world beyond itself while calling attention to itself as a created object: "The subjective criteria so often applied to determining whether an object is art are activated by the 'opacity' dimension of the work, so to speak. In other words, there is a sheer pleasure in gazing on the harmonious sensuous elements...; and there is a kind of playful recreation in this giving of attention, an articulation of the 'surplus energy,' which art furnishes beyond any moral or practical or cognitive functions" (76). Implicit in this position is a critique of any aesthetic which regards mimesis as the overriding artistic value, an imbalance which has been characteristic of Marxist criticism from the beginning.

This critique is made explicit in the last section of the book, where Morawski outlines a comprehensive Marxist analysis of the relations between art and society, distinguishing in the process between mimesis and the narrower category of realism. Mimesis includes the representation of appearances or external sensuous data (the Platonic tradition), the representation of essences (the Aristotelian), and the representation of the actions of nature or history (the Democritean). Realism is one mode of mimesis, the one which has attracted the most attention from Marxist aestheticians, because it entails a "transmutation" of external reality: "In my view, the idea of realism includes the selection of real phenomena, the extraction of their characteristic and typical features, and the representation of these traits in a 'condensed' way that directs attention to deeper meanings, that is, to the coherences which include and yet transcend the surface appearances of phenomena" (227). Morawski takes pains to define what the "typical" and the "real" mean in a Marxist understanding of history, substantially agreeing with Lukács' placing of mimesis at the center of his aesthetic.

The category of mimesis does not exhaust the possible correlations between a work of art and its social contest; far from it. Morawski insists on distinguishing a second category, "expression," which pertains to the non-representational dimension of art.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

All art, he argues, is expressive of collective modes of feeling, even when it does not directly *represent* social materials. Non-mimetic forms such as dance, music or architecture express a collective subject—shared patterns of feeling—even though they do not image society. Raymond Williams, whom Morawski does not mention, is the most advanced spokesman for this line of argument.

By examining expressive, mimetic, formal and semiotic dimensions in the work of art, Morawski shows the way to an integrated Marxist aesthetic. His own summary of the Marxist position is more precise and concentrated than any paraphrase I could offer: "1. . . . art is not dependent on any single factor but on a number of elements idiogenetic as well as allogenetic, in conjuncture, among which the crucial one usually is the contemporary historical situation, which is characterized by conflicts of many kinds that can be linked to the current ideological polarizations; 2. . . . investigation of these interdependencies will include not only the elements of so-called content but also those of *form* (by no means a phenomenon set apart from the dynamic artistic process as a whole. . .); 3. . . . art not only is influenced by society, but also and conversely art has an *active* part in molding the social consciousness; 4. . . . these interrelations between art and society do not arise in some impersonal fashion but are *mediated*, above all by the creator-personality (also by the specific, psychologically and historically determined audience)." (303-4).

The third point in this summary bespeaks a humanist element which has been present in Marxist criticism from the beginning. Like Marx, Morawski regards art as a key to understanding the meaning of our humanity, as an instrument in our efforts to overcome alienation; and he regards the art-work as a potential model for all human dealings with other man and with nature in a state of freedom. Like Lukâcs, Fischer, Caudwell and others in the Marxist tradition, he views art as a prime agent in the humanizing of our species, in the discovery of our full potential.

Scott Sanders

Lucien Goldmann, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*. M.I.T. Press, 1973.

The Philosophy of the Enlightenment, written in 1960 and first published in 1968, is prefaced with the author's apologies. We are told it lacks the scholarly research the topic deserves, and that too much space is devoted to the religious dimensions of Enlightenment philosophy. Goldmann even suggests that he would not have undertaken the project in the first place had it not been commissioned by a German publisher. Indeed, the only justification he offers for the essay is a few hypotehses he claims he would not have ventured in a more substantial work.

After such a beginning, the reader might wonder if the book is worth reading at all. And to some extent this concern is justified. In general, the work has nothing to tell the student of the Enlightenment which has not been stated better elsewhere. Even the sections of Christianity, which Goldmann thought were too long, turn out, with few exceptions, to be too schematic. Most of the three chapter book is taken up with a review of the well known relations between individualistic philosophy and bourgeois economy and a rather superficial discussion of the religious beliefs of selected Enlightenment thinkers. Yet, the reader who stays for the third (and shortest) chapter on the Enlightenment and modern society will be rewarded with an intriguing analysis. Goldmann does indeed generate several hypotheses which, while not made

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

explicit, are critical enough in themselves to make the whole work worth reading. These hypotheses, put forth in 1960, are especially revealing when considered in light of Goldmann's last decade of research into the problems of cultural creation in contemporary Western society.

In brief, Goldmann contends that the historical foundation of bourgeois society, the market economy, remains, even in the modern world, the sole basis for the realization of the humanistic values of the Enlightenment. This fact poses a dilemma for freedom. On the one hand, for most people in societies with bourgeois markets, individual freedom has tended to be formal and devoid of content. It is the freedom of which Anatole France spoke, for the millionnaire to sleep in a palace and for the beggar to make his bed under a bridge. On the other hand, in societies where the market has been eliminated or severely controlled and where, at least partly as a consequence, the economic condition of the masses has been improving, individual freedom, in even the formal sense, is being threatened. As a possible resolution to this dilemma, Goldmann envisages a mixed social system which combines a market economy with limitations on the private ownership of the means of production and the inclusion of workers in industrial policy-making and administration. He points to what he calls the "Yugoslav pattern" as a model in this regard.

It is impossible to assess Goldmann's ideas on the potential of freedom in the modern world, as well as his hypotheses concerning the socio-historical forces which have affected it, without considering his thinking on the French Enlightenment. The critical feature of this period was the unique development of the individual.

The autonomous individual began its ascent in Europe during the 17th century. After squatting on the urban margins of the middle ages for hundreds of years, this new social type started to emerge in every collective endeavor from family living and religious worship to political thought and economic action. Like all major historical transformations, the rise of the individual brought disruption. Institutions were set in disarray. Answers to fundamental contradictions of social life which had held, more or less, for hundreds of years began to appear false and misleading. These disruptions, and the efforts of various collective subjects to come to terms with them, are well documented in the intellectual productions of the period.

Three great schools of thought, each with a variety of subtypes, officiated over the dissolution of the medieval vision of the world. In spite of their many and profound differences, rationalism and empiricism, along with the Enlightenment, were in agreement that individual consciousness was "the absolute origin of knowledge and action."[2] This proposition, in turn, placed all three schools in direct opposition to religions organized around a hierarchical authority which distributes revealed truth. However, the rejection of the dominant Church of the middle ages by modern individualism in no way necessitated its abandoning religion *per se*, or even

2. *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, p. 19. Goldmann suggests that the dominance of one or another form of individualism was determined largely by the objective social situation in different countries at different times. For example, in his Kant dissertation he hypothesized that, "where the economic and social structure of a country is born. . . of a compromise between two opposed classes, the world view of its philosophers and poets will. . . be much more pragmatic and less radical than in countries where a long struggle has kept the rising class in radical opposition." Thus the philosophical thought of the English bourgeoisie, which, because of its early and rapid rise in the seventeenth century had to develop pragmatic relations with the still powerful British nobility, tended to be empiricist and sensualist. The French brougeoisie, on the other hand, which was unable to achieve power through compromise, was characterized by rationalist philosophy, and radical political and social theory. (cf. *Immanuel Kant*, [London: New Left Books, 1971] pp. 37-38.)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Christianity. Indeed, as Stanley Taylor observed in an excellent but little known work, modern individualism retained a fundamental Christian tenet regarding the infinite worth of the human soul.[3] Throughout the middle ages the individual soul had become increasingly important in the writings of Church apologists. In a sense, the exaltation of individuality during the Enlightenment was simply the culmination of an evolution started centuries earlier in theology. However, the individual soul did not enter into the Enlightenment without a considerable transmutation. The worth of the soul in the medieval world view was linked to its place in a totality which was contingent on the divine will. Each soul had a unique relation to a universe which had God as its ever present ordering force, and its significance and value derived from that relation. Seventeenth and eighteenth century individualist philosophy, especially in its empirical and Enlightenment phases, tended to reject the notion of contingency. The regularities of the natural and social universes were not expressions of divine will. They were the result of general laws or principles akin to those which governed the movement of the wonderful machines which were being created in that period. Indeed, a popular conception of the universe was as a perfectly designed clock. This modification of the traditional Christian view was not radical enough to dispense with religion altogether. In fact, it was by no means accidental, nor was it mere concession to tradition, that, with few exceptions, the leading figures of the rationalist and Enlightenment phases of individualistic philosophy were deists. The rationalists and the *philosophes* needed a deity as an essential part of the inner theoretical structure of their world vision.[4] The perfectly designed clock had to have a perfect clockmaker. However, the retention of God as mere creator of the universe did not interfere with the freeing of the individual soul from its divine totality. As long as God was in his heavens and all was well with the world, the significance of the human being became a human problem. The infinite worth of the soul was transfered to the mind. For the mind alone was the stadium of rationality and objectivity.

It was in this context that the three major intellectual currents of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries turned away from religions based on revelation. Indeed, all of the old institutions which had maintained the medieval community—the Church, the family, and the aristocratic status structure—came under suspicion of clouding human minds. In this respect, the individualistic revival, of which the Enlightenment was a part, was similar to earlier outbreaks of individualist philosophy. Taylor observes that "the rise of pronounced individualism whether ancient or modern is paralleled with the decay of religion and the growth of secular knowledge."[5] For example, many of the assaults on established institutions and official religion in the eighteenth century had analogues in the ideas of the Greek Sophists in the fifth century B.C. The erosion of Greek society gave rise to the conviction that there were neither universal truths nor sacred social orders. There was only "a conventional order resting on the interests and opinions of men."[6] However, it would be a mistake to assume from this that there was nothing unique about the Enlightenment. Eighteenth century thought included a dimension not found, to any significant degree, in earlier forms of individualism: the idea that *all* humans have an inalienable right to liberty based on

3. Stanley Taylor, *Conceptions of Institutions and the Theory of Knowledge*. (New York: Bookman Associates, 1956), pp. 32-33.

4. Goldmann notes that while the empiricists were confronted by the same problem, their perspective enabled them to dismiss it as insoluble (and therefore unworthy of serious consideration) without contradicting themselves. *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, p. 33.

5. *Op. cit.*, p. 31.

6. *Op. cit.*, p. 38.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their equality as autonomous beings. This added dimension, which is especially apparent in the Enlightenment phase of modern individualism, was related to the emergence to dominance of a new institution; the economy based almost exclusively on exchange.[7]

The linking of the fundamental principles of Enlightenment humanism to the organization of production and distribution based on exchange is a crucial part of Goldmann's analysis. He is able to demonstrate that the essential structures of Enlightenment political and social philosophy are homologous with the structures of exchange which characterize the bourgeois market. For example, the *Social Contract* is simply the replication in political theory of a notion which is basic to market exchange, that the agreement of two or more autonomous wills creates a mutually binding engagement. Similarly, the idea of human *equality* has its origins in the principle that within the framework of the market transaction all status distinctions are disregarded. The act of exchange is formally democratic. Whether you are a king or a peasant does not count in the free market where it is purely a matter of one dollar, one vote. This leads to two additional Enlightenment ideals: universality and tolerance. Sellers and buyers seek each other in the market and engage in exchanges which are governed by general rules completely independent of themselves. Religious, political, and ethnic differences between the involved parties are tolerated in the interest of the exchange. In this regard, Goldmann asserts that historically "the development of commercial relations has always worked against fanaticism and wars of religion."[8] Finally, *property* and *freedom*, two of the most important categories of Enlightenment thought, are directly related to the liberal market. Indeed, they are the fundamental condition of exchange as well as its result. Sellers and buyers must have rights of disposal over the goods they intend to exchange. Moreover they must be assumed to be free to engage in exchange in the first place. To support the latter contention, Goldmann traces the gradual development of laws protecting city dwellers from feudal authority in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries to legal complications in the marketplace. Many commercial transactions had been declared null and void, he observes, because one of the participants was a runaway serf who did not have the right to buy or sell.

Goldmann's demonstration of the structural homologies between exchange relations in the liberal market and the major categories of the Enlightenment is by no means a

7. It is true that the erosion of traditional institutions and the emergence of Sophistic philosophy in ancient Greece were related to economic developments similar in many respects to those which gave rise to modern individualism. Writing of the Sophists, historian Arnold Hauser suggests: "It is to be noted that their rationalism and relativism are connected with the same trend of economy and the same general impulse toward free competition and money-making as gave rise to the Renaissance emancipation of science, the enlightenment of the eighteenth century, and the materialism of the nineteenth. Their experience of ancient capitalism aroused the same reactions in them as the experience of modern capitalism does in their successors." (*The Social History of Art*, Vol. I, [New York: Vintage Books, 1951] p. 92). Hauser refers to the fifth century B.C. as the "age of enlightenment in Greece." However, ancient capitalism differed from its modern counterpart in several important ways. First, the market economy in fifth century Greece did not involve nearly as many levels of society as it did in eighteenth century Europe. Even in the fullest flowering of Ancient Greek democracy, only a relatively small urban elite was able to participate in the economic and political process. Second, and more importantly, the ancient market remained primarily the locus for the exchange of *use-values* whereas the eighteenth century market evolved from that early form to penetrate and dominate the whole productive apparatus of society. It is the orientation of the whole social capacity to the production of exchange-values which is the unique character of the eighteenth century market.

8. *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, p. 22.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

revolutionary accomplishment. In fact, he himself comments that this approach to Enlightenment thought was well known enough at the turn of the twentieth century to be considered by many educated people, particularly the Marxists, to be "one of the decisive achievements of Western intellectual history."[9] However, Goldmann feels that much of the traditional Marxist thinking on the dialectical development of the Enlightenment is no longer justified. It is important to note, in this regard, that his disagreement with what he calls "the accepted Marxist analysis" is not with its assessment of the origins and character of Enlightenment thought, but with its critique.

Marxists have never opposed the humanistic principles of the Enlightenment, only their inevitably abstract and formal character in bourgeois society. The critique, in this regard, is well known. What is the meaning to the propertyless masses of the right to dispose of property? Where is the humanistic content in a notion of freedom which includees, for a large protion of a society's population, the freedom to live in deprivation, and even to starve? All of the great Enlightenment principles are marred by their connection with the very institution which gave them birth. The only way to affirm these principles in their full and concrete potential, is to reconstruct them on a new foundation: the human community. This aspect of the Marxist analysis has often been described in terms of the dialectical movement of the negation of the negation. The medieval totality is dissolved by Enlightenment individualism only to be restored on a new level in socialism. At the same time the abstract bourgeois values of life, liberty and happiness are negated only to be revived as concrete realities. In Goldmann's words, "dialectical thought [i.e. Marxism] conceives man as a historical being who constantly transcends his nature through action and thus moves towards the only possible conjunction of the human and the divine, the reconciliation of man and nature in conscious history, which is the one and only realization of freedom."[10]

While Goldmann has always been sympathetic to this analysis, he suggests that in light of recent developments in both capitalist and socialist societies, it has to be modified drastically in a number of respects. In the first place, the tendencies toward the proletarianization of the medium and petty bourgeoisie and the complete impoverishment of the working class, which Marx observed in his own day and which continued into the early decades of the 20th century, have been halted in Western society. As a result, Goldmann observes, "the ground has been cut away from under one of the most important of the socialist criticisms of the capitalist system."[11] At the same time, the humanistic values of the Enlightenment, by and large, have not been realized in the socialist societies. Goldmann recognizes, of course, that this has to be qualified by the fact that successful socialist revolutions to date have occurred in societies which lacked a strong Enlightenment tradition. Moreover, a fundamental condition for the realization of freedom and tolerance in *any* type of social system is the security of that system from the external and internal threat of destruction. Until the Chinese Revolution in the late forties and the establishment of an international balance of nuclear terror in the early fifties, the Soviet Union had stood alone against a powerful and hostile capitalist world. Yet, Goldmann fears that in spite of the validity of these qualifications they do not fully account for the threatened position of Enlightenment values in the contemporary socialist world. Consequently, he hypothesizes that the market economy may itself be necessary for the realization of

9. *Ibid.*, p. 83.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 93.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

human freedom. Now although Goldmann does not defend, or even elaborate, this hypothesis, it seems fairly evident that it rests less on his analysis of the economic and social structure of the Soviet Union than on his analysis of, and, perhaps more importantly, his aspirations for Western bourgeois society.

During the three decades following the First World War the capitalist world was racked by a series of economic and political crises. The period started with the Bolshevik Revolution and proceeded with a massive global depression which was followed, in turn, by a second devastating World War which was, in large part, a fratricidal struggle between fascist and non-fascist capitalists. Corresponding to these shocks was the disintegration of traditional bourgeois culture. The Enlightenment values of individual autonomy, self-reliance, and freedom had long been challenged by socialist critics as being devoid of real content. Now, the efficacy of those values came into question by individualist thinkers themselves. As a result, genuine bourgeois culture of the period was dominated by a sense of anguish and despair embodied in both philosophy and art as existentialism. However, this all began to change in the late 1940s. The massive depression that had been expected as capitalist economies shifted to peace time production never materialized. Indeed, the upturn started by the war continued almost unabated. Standards of living began to rise everywhere in the West. By the mid-1950s it was clear to Goldmann and most analysts, non-Marxist as well as Marxist, that the thirty or so year crisis had not marked the beginning of the end of capitalism, but rather a transitional phase in its development.[12] However, unlike several important critics of capitalism who interpreted the economic and cultural stabilization in the west as the culmination of a dialectical movement within the Enlightenment resulting in the emergence of an oppressive technological totality,[13] Goldmann views it as a sign of rebirth: "Despite the external threat of the socialist nations and the movement towards independence of the underdeveloped countries, despite the occasional shocks and fever symptoms accompanying the end of colonialism, western society is in the process of recovering from the most serious of its inner sickness, and is thus taking away the foundation of ideologies based on anxiety and despair... We may assume with a fair degree of probability that—given success in achieving disarmament and ending the danger of atomic war—western society is moving towards another great period of Enlightenment."[14] This passage, which was written ten years before his death, is extremely important in light of the totality of Goldmann's work. Indeed, notwithstanding his prefatory apologies, it is significant that Goldmann took up an analysis of the Enlightenment at this particular point in his career.

Until 1960 Goldmann's concrete research was largely confined to three great thinkers who had attempted to come to terms with the dissolution of the medieval community. The work of Pascal, Racine and Kant manifested what Goldmann, following Lukács, called a tragic vision. In the face of the moral neutrality, the denial of transcendent principles, in brief, the skepticism, of radical rationalism and empiricism, each of these writers attempted to discover a universal ethical and

12. Goldmann was later to interpret the crisis as a result of the transformation of the liberal market which had characterized capitalism from the time of the Enlightenment, to a market dominated by national and international monopolies. Cf. his *Création culturelle dans la societe moderne* (Paris: Denoel, 1971), p. 52. A translation of this book is forthcoming from Telos Press.

13. Cf. Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, (New York: Herder and Herder, 1973); and Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964).

14. *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, pp. 84-85.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

epistemological touchstone. None of the three were reactionaries in the sense that they wanted simply to return to the security of the medieval Christian totality. They recognized the validity especially of the scientific advances of the individualist world vision as well as its inadequacy. But if there could be no return to the past, neither was there hope for the future. Indeed, this was the tragedy of their vision; the characteristic which separated them from a solution to the problem they had correctly assessed. The tragic vision is essentially ahistorical. It has no conception of liberation from uncertainty, skepticism and human loneliness, *in this world*, by means of social and political praxis. For the theology of radical Jansenism which constituted the tragic vision of Pascal and Racine, any hope for the improvement of man's spiritual future, much less the empirical human condition, is diabolical in origin. Goldmann quotes Martin de Barcos in this regard: "Thoughts of the future are a dangerous and clever temptation of the Evil one, contrary to the spirit of the Gospel, and capable of ruining everything if not resisted; they must be rejected without even a first glance, since God's word tells us not only to take no thought for the morrow in things temporal but also in things spiritual, and it is those which hang much more on His will."[15] There is more optimism in Kant's vision, however, its hope is confined to the ahistorical realm of the spirit. While Kant took a significant step toward a genuine dialectical, i.e., social and historical, solution to the epistemological and ethical problems of radical individualism he left human knowledge and action at a difficult impasse. Knowledge is social in form but unsocial in content: "What now unites men in their thoughts and their actions and constitutes their still imperfect community is universal and *a priori form*, common to all individuals (the pure intuition of space and time, the categories o of understanding, the categorical imperative), and aesthetic judgement, partly formal and partly material, but purely *subjective*. What separates them is empirical matter, differing from individual to individual (sensations, inclinations, selfish interests)."[16] Epistemologically, humans are forever incapable of fully penetrating reality; their knowledge is always incomplete. Ethically, human action strives for suprasensible values; its goals are not of this world and therefore out of the reach of empirical man.

It is the essence of tragedy to pose questions for which there are no answers. Although the social bases of radical Jansenism and Kantian philosophy were eliminated by the disappearance of the *noblesse de robe* in France and the emergence to power of the bourgeoisie in Germany,[17] the questions posed by the tragic thinkers were never answered. They were simply *replaced* by the Enlightenment with its own reconciliation of rationalism and empiricism and its own new answers to the problem of the human future.

For most thinkers of the Enlightenment the derivation of an ethical system from the conscience of the individual was unproblematic. The idea of the community or human totality as a possible source of transcendent values was largely rejected. Indeed, the community was viewed as an essentially negative force; it was, as we noted earlier, the major source of misunderstanding and error and, therefore, hardly the place to seek valid principles of human conduct. The great ideals of freedom, tolerance, equality, etc., had no enduring positive content; they obtained their full force only in *opposition* to the community. This is why they appear so formal and devoid of content when they reign unopposed. The only positive ethical rule offered by the Enlightenment, in a sense, is a negative one. Leave the individual to pursue his own interest and he will benefit the general good. If an individual behaves in a way which

15. *The Hidden God*. (New York: The Humanities Press, 1964), p. 34.
16. *Immanuel Kant*, p. 224. (emphasis in original)
17. *The Hidden God*, p. 23.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

clearly harms his fellow man then he is simply ignorant of his own true self interest. The problems with this kind of formulation are many and obvious. First among them is the fact that genuine private interest, i.e., that based on an entirely enlightened and rational assessment of one's situation varies from one social group to another. The only major Enlightenment figure to confront this issue at all was Helvetius who argued that while it is "interest alone which dictates all our judgments," this truth "cannot be perceived in its full extent without considering probity and genius relatively, 1) to an individual, 2) to a small society, 3) to a nation, 4) to different ages and countries, and 5) to the whole world."[18] In spite of this insight, however, Helvetius remained entirely within the Enlightenment by maintaining that every person possesses the immanent power to assess the interests of humanity in general and to place these above the interests of particular groups. What this amounts to, of course, is that while interests derived from various groups may diverge and even conflict, rational man has the ability to overcome these group prejudices and to attain his ultimate true self interest which is the interest of mankind. This hardly solves the problem; it only states it more clearly. However, it does represent an advance over most Enlightenment thinkers, including the Encyclopedists, who saw no problem at all in basing bourgeois morality on individual conscience.

The "victory" of Enlightenment thought over radical Jansenism and its persistence in the face of the intellectually superior Kantian system was thus more of a socio-political feat than a conceptual one. And while he never questioned the humanistic contribution of the values developed by Enlightenment thinkers against the aristocracy and the church, Goldmann, like many other intellectuals of the early twentieth century was more interested in issues such as the nature of the human community and the problem of social ethics which had been raised by the tragic writers but were largely ignored in the Enlightenment. This is the context in which he viewed the dialectical vision of the world.

For Goldmann the tragic vision, rather than those of rationalism, empiricism, or the Enlightenment, was the true source of modern dialectical thought. This is not surprising in that his first serious encounter with Marxism came while he was a student in Vienna in 1934 through the teachings of Max Adler and the early writings of Georg Lukács. Like most socialist radicals of this period, Goldmann took it for granted that the abstract, humanistic principles of the Enlightenment had been concretized and incorporated into Marxism.[19] Therefore, the battle against the various forms of bourgeois individualism—which is an important part of the overall struggle for genuine individual freedom through human community—could most effectively be approached by bypassing the Enlightenment and going directly to the luminaries of the tragic vision. For it was Pascal and Kant who first confronted the social and intellectual dissolution of the Christian community in such a way as to constitute "an essential stage in the movement which goes beyond skeptical or dogmatic rationalism towards the birth and elaboration of dialectical philosophy."[20] The latter is, of course, a prerequisite for the emergence of a new humanistic totality.

In light of the foregoing, Goldmann's assessment of the failure of socialist societies to fully realize the Marxist vision of a free community of producers, and his hypothesis about the humanistic potential of the bourgeois market, along with his subsequent concern with Enlightenment philosophy gives new significance to his last decade of

18. C.A. Helvétius, *De l'Esprit* (Essay II) quoted in *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, p. 30.
19. See, for example, his *Recherches dialectiques* (Paris: Gallimard, 1959), p. 13.
20. *The Hidden God*, p. 309.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

work on cultural creation in modern society. There is a large measure of consistency in Goldmann's transition from the analysis of the tragic classic of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to the study of contemporary *avant garde* literature and drama; and his short encounter with the Enlightenment in 1960 was a critical pivot in this transition. In brief, the experience of western bourgeois societies in the decade after the Second World War seems to have led Goldmann to the conclusion that the Enlightenment had not been determinately negated by either the tragic or Marxist visions because its inner dialectic had not entirely worked itself out during the period those visions were elaborated. This doesn't mean that the Marxian dialectic is not valid for the present epoch. Indeed, until his death in October, 1970, Goldmann remained convinced that socialism was the only viable alternative to the barbarism of modern organizational capitalism. However, the Marxist vision has to be rejuvenated; it has to penetrate the new structure of capitalist society and determine the critical possibilities within western culture. Thus, Goldmann's exploration of the philosophy of the Enlightenment and his analyses of contemporary aesthetic production flow together as parts of a unified movement. The former constitutes a review of the early stages of bourgeois thought; a reconsideration of its golden age. It is also, in effect, a reassessment of the humanist potential of a system which seems remarkably durable. The turn to modern literature, on the other hand, is, in many respects, a return to the problem of the tragic vision. The works of writers like Ionesco, Beckett, Robbe-Grillet and Genet represent, for Goldmann, a struggle against the tendencies toward depersonalization and spiritual impoverishment which threaten to increase with the continued stabilization of Western society. Through these creations it is possible to gauge not only the degree of oppressive totalization in society (the plays of Ionesco and Beckett and the novels of Robbe-Grillet, for example, reflect a reified world where intelligible conversation no longer exists and men and inanimate objects are often indistinguishable from one another) but also the strength of the forces of revolt (Goldmann considered the works of Genet to be especially sensitive barometers in this latter regard). And just as Pascal and Kant sought in the *ancien régime* an answer to the questions of how man must act in face of the dissolution of old and familiar institutions, and what he may hope for, the modern creators draw on an implicit vision of personal freedom and human dignity, i.e., a vision of Enlightenment values, in their critiques of contemporary western society.

Goldmann felt that the events in Paris of May, 1968, constituted a political expression of the hope he found in *avant garde* art. The strike of young workers and students showed that contrary to the "accepted Marxist analysis," a revolt of economically secure and privileged strata against the repressive cultural totality of modern society was possible. Furthermore, the programs developed by the strikers, while not always clear or consistent, demonstrated a fundamental concern with the realization of Enlightenment values. More than three years earlier Goldmann had distinguished between simple bourgeois tolerance which implied "some degree of indifference to error" and, what would be a genuine realization of that value within the context of socialist humanism. The latter, he noted, would involve a freedom of thought and expression which "precludes any such indifference to the opinions of others and presupposes a common and permanent effort to find truth and achieve agreement through free, frank, and open discussion."[21] Such discussion took place in virtually every meeting place in Paris during the brief period of the May "Revolution." And the topics which dominated these meetings were those related to the problems of

21. "Socialism and Humanism" in Erich Fromm, ed., *Socialist Humanism* (Anchor Books, 1966), p. 51.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

human dignity and self-determination in technologically advanced and highly productive societies. Goldmann recognized that the failure of the strikers to fully develop their programs of self-management and industrial democracy was due in large part to their inability to organize themselves in an effective way. Yet, in a sense, this inability was a sign of their potential. The very fact that the students and workers had, by and large, rejected the organizational models of the Second and Third Internationals indicated they were starting to grapple seriously with the economic and cultural realities of organizational capitalism.[22]

It has been eight years since the French riot police tore down the barricades to end what is now referred to in Paris as "le spectacle" of 1968. Throughout the western world students have returned to the universities and, with the exception of occasional eruptions of traditional wage and contract disputes, workers have returned to the factories. Moreover, it seems that the middle level salaried workers and the technical and social intelligentsia, the strata Goldmann had felt the most potential to restructure modern society, have returned, in many cases to despair, to the quiet, non-critical life which characterized the 1950s. Was the critical spirit of the sixties just a passing fad; did it suffer the same fate as the mass produced gadgets which briefly pacify the populations of the technological societies and then go out of fashion so they can be replaced by new gadgets? If this is the case, and if Goldmann's assessment of the inability of traditional Marxist analysis to penetrate the reality of contemporary society is correct, then have we not good reason to give up all hope of a genuine humanist alternative to the present situation? I am sure Goldmann would answer "no" to these questions. While it is true that much of the optimism of the last decade has been lost, I think the modern vision is actually more one of tragedy than of hopelessness. And while the posing of questions for which there are no immediate answers is certainly not insurance against barbarism, it does testify to the persistence of critical consciousness. If my characterization of the current situation is correct, then the hope for the concrete realization of Enlightenment values that was expressed by Goldmann during the last years of his life is as alive today as it was a decade ago.

William W. Mayrl

22. Cf. "Pouvoir et humanisme" in *Marxisme et sciences humaines* (Paris: Gallimard, 1970), pp. 327-361.

Hans Peter Duerr. *Ni Dieu—ni Mètre. Anarchistische Bemerkungen zur Bewusstseins und Erkenntnistheorie*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1974. 238 pages.

Duerr's *Bemerkungen*, or anarchic observations on theories of consciousness and knowledge, are advertised as a "defense of the fall of man in the tradition of Bakunin and anarchistic mysticism." This back-cover summary of the slim volume is augmented for the more curious reader who actually opens the book by the author's introductory observation that he deals with the existence of the devil and of God ("der liebe Gott"). But this is not a theological tract, at least not intentionally; instead, it is an attempt to refute the prevailing epistemological notions of dialectical materialism (Duerr, indeed, rejects both Hegelian and Marxian dialectics) as well as doctrines of what Duerr calls the scientism of critical rationalism. It is unclear whether Duerr sees any further connections between those two otherwise differing philosophical

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

approaches to the theory of knowledge or whether their empiricism and materialism have, in his opinion, forged them into an essential unity however much they may appear to differ from one another. In this context the dialectic—whether of Hegel or Marx (Duerr sees them as connected but does not indicate the distinctions to be made between them)—can be attacked precisely because it is a system of thought which posits itself as true, and Duerr will have none of such systems. His recalling of the devil is thus an attempt to reestablish the centrality of doubt, of skepticism, of logical paradoxes in the face of what he assumes to be the gradual elimination of these attitudes and ideas within the epistemological frameworks of much if not most of contemporary philosophy.

A book which invites the potential reader to re-examine in today's world the question of the existence of the devil, even a vaguely metaphorical devil, yet is not primarily a religious tract or a theological treatise, is by its very nature provocative if seriously constructed. The format of Duerr's book, originally a dissertation at Heidelberg in 1971, raises some doubts about that seriousness. The actual text of the work comprises seventy pages followed by over a hundred pages of footnotes in small print. Such a format reminds one unfortunately of an insurance policy and restricts the examination of the text itself. Duerr's preference for this regrettable format is based on his stated belief that his work, unencumbered by more technical scholarly materials, will be more readable and more appealing. Yet so much of his argument lies in claims made to deducing errors in the logic and reasoning of others, that the reader who does not necessarily intend to agree with all of Duerr's propositions but who nevertheless is interested in his work, finds him or herself constantly searching in the fine print for what is ultimately of considerable importance to the text. Duerr's subject matter, particularly the thesis that contemporary philosophical traditions making use of the dialectic and especially critical rationalism, are logically invalid, is too serious to be made 'readable' in this manner. Whatever his intentions, he has at the outset perhaps restricted his usefulness to the serious reader.

In chapter one, entitled the "Basis of Knowledge," Duerr presents a systematic attempt to undermine the position of the critical rationalists with regard to the question of the possibility of positing ultimate proofs. He begins with an assault on some prevailing philosophical perceptions of reality. "We are often too easily led astray by the view that 'reality' refers to something confronting us, a kind of clay or 'chaotic multiplicity' of the idealists; a material which we can mold within certain limitations and which sometimes forces us to discontinue our efforts. Perhaps we see it as an opponent with whom we must come to an agreement."

The remainder of the chapter is in the form of a Socratic inquiry via questions demanding a negative response, each of which questions claims to refute all philosophical stances which posit some form of absolute proof, including the stance of the critical rationalists which Duerr thus identifies with the absolutists, despite the pronounced rejection of this attitude by adherents of critical rationalism. Popper's views on the certainty of uncertainty (formulated by Duerr in such sentences as: "We are *searching* for something which we *can* indeed find, without however ever being able to know that we have found it"—20-21) are rejected on the grounds that they posit intrinsically knowing that there is such a truth to be known.

Duerr advances a lengthy section on the possibility of self-referential sentences to counter the view of the critical rationalists that 'knowing' has been or should be replaced by the concept of criticism (25). He summarizes his view of critical rationalism's position by stating: "What at first appearaed to be so anti-authoritarian and undogmatic reveals itself finally as a philosophy which—notwithstanding all its

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

protests to the contrary—is intent on 'self-justification,' since it feels itself to be as troubled by thoughts about a possible 'inconsistency' as Cartesian reasoning was by the thought of a hidden devil which took pleasure in always making that reasoning seem foolish" (29).

This attack on a basic position of critical rationalism is then intensified by Duerr's analysis of the self-referential qualities of language in general ("...can a sentence ever neutralize itself"?—32). Duerr obviously denies the existence of such qualities. Yet, his conclusions are more startling for their weakness, given the rigor of his arguments to this point. As an escape from what he has termed a 'trilemma,' he seeks apparent certainties in place of certain certainties—a plea perhaps for the strength to endure doubt and uncertainty, to accept what Duerr calls the devil. The simplistic tone of his concluding arguments in Chapter One is the more disappointing for the explicit failure to formulate the practical difficulties of adopting an attitude of almost mystical indifference to the anxieties engendered by his own logic. "Even if we are made secure, that is still not claiming that nothing more *can* ever happen to us. When we prove something we resolve difficulties to some degree and are not plagued at every step by further possible objections. And if someone should now say: 'Aren't we still being led astray by some little devil?'—we can reply: 'Well, even if it's true, it doesn't matter.' What I don't know can't hurt me" (35). In essence, his beloved anarchism takes on dangerous amounts of academic immorality, from which clever pleas for readmission of the devil to modern thought do not redeem it. This is all the more unfortunate as the issues contained in the bantering tone are serious indeed, and they are often enough logically well constructed.

Chapter Two, "Self-consciousness and Self-referentiality" begins with the statement of the general dilemma about knowing what we have not known before (40-41). Here Duerr becomes more obviously serious in his treatment of the practical dangers resulting from the use of a fallacious epistemological model from which such a question and its previous answers arise. In explaining the apparent paranoia which drug users often report experiencing in our own societies, Duerr asks: "Doesn't the great panic which sometimes seizes one while under the influence of LSD or mescaline originate largely from the fact that it is suddenly clear to us that our experiences in the drugged state are not necessarily variations of those with which we are already familiar, but that what we are experiencing does not fit...our expectations? And that is particularly true in a civilization which tries to seal itself from incisive experiences, which tolerates a growing consumption of tranquillizers..." (41). Duerr insists there is no need for absolute correspondence between *Erkenntnis* (knowledge) and *Wahrheit* (truth). Such a position indicates the tendency to such an absolute correspondence, but fails, it would seem, to identify the reasons for the adoption or creation of the absolute correspondence, i.e., it continues to live in a realm of appearances and thereby advocates implicitly at least a change in the model of knowledge without reference to any real basis for such a model and without reference to a means for affecting such a change.

Duerr resolves elaborate difficulties in philosophical reasoning *vis-à-vis* the origin of the conception of the *ego* and the emergence of a self-consciousness as Alexander resolved the problem of the Gordion knot. "We simply learn to use the word 'I' by learning to participate in conversations, by talking with and being talked to by other people. And if someone were to ask us with a sly and skeptical intention: 'How can you ever know what I mean when I say I?'...then one should reply: 'The same way I know when you say you to me'" (48). But Alexander's knot was hardly so complex as the issue, unresolved by Duerr's sword cut, of self-consciousness. The implicit plea

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for uncertainty to be allowed to exist within the reality framework, without this 'devil' being painted blacker than it is, leads to Duerr's sub-title: "Just as there is no rule inherent in whatever I do, just as no 'infinite value' is inherent in calculations, so too no God and no basis is inherent, no logical structure in things, no 'I' even if I can say over and over again, 'I'—ni dieu, ni mêtre" (49). Unquestionable, Duerr has made an eloquent plea for a change from the ontological framework in which questions about the relationship of knowledge to truth and self to self-consciousness are currently posited, and has at times graphically depicted the implicit errors of such prevalent epistemological models. But he has not pointed a way out other than through the criticism which is also the *forte* of the critical rationalists. His explicit solution is rather in the admitted direction of a mysticism which has professed ties to Bakunin, for example.

Chapter Three, "The Consciousness of the Other," is not surprisingly the most disappointing, for precisely in the area where some germinal ethic might substantiate some of Duerr's reasoning, his philosophical, speculative tone becomes most absolute (the closer he gets to the footnotes!), and he leaves us at the end of that chapter with an untranslated, though transliterated Arabic (?) quotation which presumably means something. The chapter returns again to the plea for the admissability of doubt which would render the problems associated with the recognition of the 'other' less insurmountable. "Concepts like the philosophical word 'consciousness' appear to have first become significant wherever experiences we have had become almost intolerably unstable" (68). Does this then represent a view critical not merely of the philosophical framework of contemporary western culture or is it, as the following sentence may indicate, an articulation of the need for simplicity (the toleration of inexplicable contradictions without reference, however, to the dialectic)? "Whenever we are very often disillusioned (we might express it in this way)—there appears the view that a 'mediating instance' has arisen between things and us ourselves which on the one hand is the necessary tool for comprehending things but on the other hand is exactly that which prevents us from having direct access to them" (68).

It is unfortunate that Duerr does not develop more fully his own concept of 'doubt' (i.e., his metaphorical devil which he has perhaps rendered too non-metaphorically). An attempt to integrate his 'doubt' into the structure of the dialectic might have made his rather absolute rejection of that dialectic, in either its Hegelian or Marxian form, unnecessary. Indeed, the question of doubt *vis-à-vis* first premises would have been more intriguing if it did not so often, in these few pages, appear to be an argument akin to the familiar infinity-plus-one counting competitions of children. Whatever number you offer, I can top it—a challenge eliciting from the unknowing victim the wise retort "infinity," which in turn produces the triumphant rejoinder, "infinity-plus-one." There is within this rejoinder a great deal of unconscious wisdom which, however, becomes helpful when its implications are carefully analyzed. This occurs in Duerr's book, but it might have occurred more consistently. His advocacy of the devil or of doubt as a challenge to absolute belief particularly with respect to the doctrines of critical rationalism is provocative, though it does not, as Duerr seems to believe, succeed in overcoming the latter's positions, for it is itself too absolute. And the concept of doubt is, as I indicated above, not carefully enough worked out but rather thrown out in metaphorical guise and separated from its rather natural ally, the dialectic itself. Perhaps in a later work Duerr will offer a more analytically persuasive defense of his 'devil' and, based on this brief *prologomenon*, such a later work would be most interesting.

Duncan Smith

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Claudio Pozzoli, ed. *Jahrbuch Arbeiterbewegung*. Vol. 2: *Marxistische Revolutionstheorien*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1974.

Although this work contains a variety of essays on the theory of revolution in Marx, Luxemburg, Lenin and Trotsky, a report on the Dutch "Group of International Communists," a discussion on writing, working class history, workers' folk songs, music, and fight songs in the Weimar Republic and a wealth of bibliographies and reviews, the following review will focus on Korsch's letters to Brecht, Mattick, and Partos. The editor has selected two of Korsch's letters to Brecht, nineteen (of thirty-three extant) letters to Mattick, and six letters to Partos which not only provide insights into Korsch's personality but which also furnish important material dealing with his theoretical and political development. They elucidate subjects discussed in his published writings, provide self-critiques and corrections, and discuss topics not treated elsewhere.

In the first letter written to Brecht[1] from London (March 17, 1934), Korsch reports his "painful" decision to stay in Englaand where "perhaps the decisive battle between fascism and socialism for the whole of Europe will take place—and to be sure sooner than I had previously thought. Hence one could eventually participate from here very well" (123-126). Much of the letter is concerned with providing a clarification of what "pound" and "talent" mean in English and providing detailed legal information on trial procedure, both for Brecht's *Three-Penny Opera*. Furthermore, Korsch tells Brecht that he is sending him information on abortion and birth control, evidently at Brecht's request. Finally, Meister Ko reports to his student, "I am provisionally studying still more literature on revolution in general, and am seeking at the same time the actual meaning of Marxism in the present English labor movement, theoretically and practically considered."

In the last letter of the collection, written to Brecht from Seattle over four years later (July 31, 1939), Korsch praises Brecht's *Galileo* and his "Julius Caesar," provides some information and addresses of common friends, and adds, "I am planning to *re*-specialize myself (*Umzuspezialisieren*) from *'Marxism'* to sociology and to the 'Logic of the Social Science.' Two planned books: I) *Social Forces and Social Movements* should be divided into a very abstract first part, and an almost ideographical second part: dealing with revolution and counterrevolution. Working time: around 2 years (at least!); II) *Social Theories* should be a textbook for academic use that will eventually land me a job. Working time: around 1 year (at most!)" (232-235). This announcement raises the thorny problem of Korsch's relation to Marxism, positivism, and the social sciences—a topic upon which his letters to Mattick and Partos throw much needed light.

In the 1930s Korsch became increasingly interested in the scientific components of Marxism, its methodology, its status as a theory, and the emirical strength or weakness of its propositions. Yet, he never adequately mediated his interest in the political-revolutionary and theoretical-scientific components of Marxian theory, although he became more interested in the formal scientific aspects of theory, and spent much time studying formal logic, mathematical calculus, and the philosophy of science. He also never adequately resolved the relation between dialectics and science, although he

1. Korsch has been widely discussed as Brecht's Marxist teacher, as Brecht participated in Korsch's discussion groups on "Critical Marxism" and "What is Living and Dead in Marxism" in Berlin. See Wolfdietrich Rasch, "Bertolt Brechts marxistischer Lehrer," *Merkur* 188 (1963); the journal *Alternative* 41 (April, 1965) on Brecht and Korsch; and Heinz Brüggemann's "Bert Brecht und Karl Korsch" in *Ueber Karl Korsch* (Frankfurt, 1973), and *Literarische Technik und soziale Revolution* (Reinbek, 1973).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tended to play down the seeming conflicts between the two, finding much materialism and empiricism in Hegel, dialectics in science, and a successful synthesis in Marx.[2]

In a letter to Mattick criticizing his concept of Marxism and dialectic (dated May 10, 1935), Korsch argues that dialectic for Marx is not a magic wand, but "served him as a hand tool for seeking and finding his scientific results; he once learned this method and had no other (in a lesser degree this is still so for us today)" (138). Korsch opposes assigning too great a role to the concept of synthesis in Marx's dialectic (as if, as Mattick wrote, the communist society was the grand synthesis of Marx's production) and concludes that he opposes "*philosophical and absolute*" interpretations of dialectics because "thereby the strict empirical scientific knowledge of the current factual situation that lies before us, and above all *praxis* as 'human sensuous activity,' is underplayed (*zu kurz kommt*)" (139). Korsch is equally critical of fetishizing science. He suggests that science has fallen prey to fetishism and that this fetishism can only be eliminated through "eliminating classes and class contradictions"—which is a "practical-historical" task—so that science can be reconstituted with material production on a higher level, in so far as it is abolished (*aufgehoben*)" (137).[3] In a letter to Mattick written December 12, 1938, Korsch stresses the compatibility, indeed the internal relation, between science and revolution: "*I wanted to say and have said* that it is a fallacy when one thinks that the militant character of revolutionary materialist theory (which is *obviously* to be preserved!) can be *protected* by *other* means against a weakening of its bones (*Knochenerweichung*) than through the *complete readiness* to accept *all* theoretically *justified modification*. . . [T]he sole means toward preserving the militant character consists in further developing science. . . I do not believe that at any time true revolutionary interest can come in conflict with real progress in science. Thus, the contrary, all true progress in science is welcome to revolutionary theory and practice!" (195-196). Yet, he argues against the Engels-Lenin emphasis on the primacy of the man-nature relation as fundamental—which demotes the relation between socialized human beings to a secondary position and renders the social sciences secondary to the natural sciences: "To me it appears that *nothing is primary here;* that *man-nature* and *man-man* are to be coordinated, that both are equiprimordial and fundamental, historically, logically, and practically. The 'new element added on with the appearance of the finished man—namely Society' in Engels' citation is to me clearly an expression of a bourgeois conception of history and theory of revolution" (142). He indicates that he approves of the distinction between the natural sciences and the social sciences to the extent that it elucidates the class character of the propositions of the social sciences, yet "the same class-character can be shown in an appropriate rational

2. Cf. Karl Korsch, "Der Empirismus in der Hegelschen Philosophie" (1931 lecture); "The Marxist Philosophy and the Sciences," a review of Haldane's book in *Living Marxism* 5:1 (Spring 1940), pp. 59-61.

3. In a letter to Paul Partos, December 16-17, 1935, Korsch argues that "fetishism" is a more useful concept than reification: "You still always use the Lukácsian concept of 'reification.' Now to be sure Marx in fact occasionally speaks of a 'thinglike disguise' and a 'thingification' (*Versachlichung*) of the social character of production. But the expression 'fetishism' is infintely better for a materialist and sociological conception and description of this form of thought. With Lukács, who extends the use of this concept without measure, it is at bottom a matter of a protest of a 'philosophy of life' against the cold, rigid, fixed, factual and material world." Korsch then goes on to discuss why the concept of fetishism is superior (169-170). Paul Partos (1911-1964) was Hungarian by birth and studied with Korsch in Berlin in the 1920s; he seems to have been one of Korsch's closest and most intelligent students. Partos emigrated to Paris in 1933 and participated in many anti-fascist groups. He fought in the Spanish Civil War and emigrated to England in 1939.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

way also to be within the natural sciences" (142-143). He chides Mattick for wanting to uncritically "allow all of science to stand as objective science (like the enchanted prince in the fairy tale!). This all hangs together with what I characterize above as the 'Engels-Lenin variant' of a tendency toward natural philosophy (*naturphilosophischen Tendenz*)" (143).

Korsch continuously emphasizes that the propositions of Marxism undercut the rigid positivist distinctions between fact and value, quantitative and qualitative propositions, description and critique. In a letter to Mattick dated June 4, 1935, he reiterates his position: "Marxism concerns itself with society primarily as in dissolution. Thus crisis is 'normal' for Marxism" (150)—which does not exclude, however, careful, empirical and quantitative analysis of the existing society. In a letter to Partos (dated November 25, 1935), he argues that: "The most important progress of proletarian against bourgeois materialism. . . consists in the *historical* and *specific* character of the propositions of proletarian theory" (159). He then interestingly notes how earlier he made "the theoretical and practical position of Marx toward *'politics'* the demarcation point of my division between what is living and dead in Marxism" (161). In this rich and suggestive letter, Korsch indicates that although he moved from a "critique of Marx-disfiguration to a more or less total critique of Marxism itself," nonetheless, "as the capitalism of today, despite its differences from earlier phases, remains 'capitalism,' so one may still call the theory and practice of the single really anti-capitalist movement, with all its necessary changes in the future, socialism-communism-Marxism."

At times, Korsch seems to go too far in his embrace of the social sciences. In a letter to Mattick, January 19, 1939, he notes that he has lost the "fragment of my self-critique" where he proposed "to shatter (*zerschlagen*) the 'materialist dialectic' (as totality); that is, to dissolve it into a series of single principles of investigation" (203). Evidently, Mattick criticizes this and other excesses in his reply, so in his next letter Korsch notes, "As with the Holy Father, one must always distinguish in me what I say in momentary moods and what I say 'ex cathedra' " (206). The fact is that Korsch never resolved the issue of the scientific status of Marxism. This is clear in his letters to Paul Partos written in June and July of 1939, where he tells of his intention to become a "regular American sociologist"—although he acknowledges to a certain ambivalence (220-232).

After Korsch's emigration to America in 1936 he wrote Mattick about his dealings with the Institute for Social Research. Ulmen has alleged that Weil wanted Korsch to be the first head of the Intitute.[4] At that time, however, Korsch was busy with politics. Yet, Korsch and his students played an active role in the school in the 1920s and, even after the Horkheimer take-over in 1931, Korsch's letters show that he remained in touch, although completely outside the Institute's "inner circle." In a letter to Mattick dated October 20, 1938, he provides the following description: "After the first couple of many hours of discussions with Horkheimer over the planned collaboration on a great book on dialectics, I am very skeptical. It appears that they want to use me approximately as they used you and your report on economics. They treat me with almost exaggerated respect, but that is only another form, corresponding to my 'high' class position and the respect due to me in virtue of it. When nothing financial results from this, I shall probably in some way break off this partnership that is now viewed very positively from all sides (an anonymous partnership insofar as I am concerned, and that suits me fine!). This is all in the deepest confidence completely between us. You can speak about it with Hans if you convey to him my request for the strictest and absolute discretion. *Pollock* is truly kind

4. See G.L. Ulmen, "Wittfogel's Science of Society," *Telos* 24 (Summer 1975), p. 85.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and is positively interested in utilizing my force of production in some form, which would also be useful for me. But he is completely immsersed in the private-capitalist business of the Institute and doesn't even take part in the discussions. *Horkheimer* is subjective (*innerlich*), as I already noticed in our discussions in Seattle, and in the last years has come very close to my, our, political standpoint. But he is in no way ready to come out with his views publicly. The entire Institute was always and is still completely grounded in a *double-bookkeeping* in politics and in revolutionary theory. It is not as bad as others (for example the 'New School') who instead of offering their teaching positions to the qualified and needy political emigrants (like A. Rosenberg, Hallgarten and—Korsch?) hire rich people like Riezler from Frankfurt or outspoken reactionaries like the Dollfuss-Wiener-Mayor *Winter* (there is a grotesque book by Winter that deserves a review in *Living Marxism*)—and all financed by American Jews and anti-fascists. These people are the most disgusting scum that one can imagine. But the people from the Institute for Social Research think that because they are merely cowardly, egotistical and limited, and not openly counterrevolutionaries, that they are, who knows how, revolutionary and ready for struggle (in secret!). *Wiesengrund* (Adorno) is one of the most capable heads in philosophy, as *Grossmann* is a luminary of economics. *Wittfogel* too, despite his boredom with his field, may accomplish something scientific. Politically he is externally still a Stalinist, while the others only want to avoid direct hostility with the Stalinists. Internally they are all without exception, in various degrees, anti-Stalinist. *Marcuse* is a sort of orthodox Marxist who might even still be a Stalinist, and is bureaucratically authoritarian in matters of bourgeois philosophy and Marxism (which today have become one and the same). Theoretically, he has somewhat more character and solidness than the others, whose greater 'freedom' consists only in a greater fluctuation and uncertainty. But he is not especially likeable as a person. *Löwenthal* and *Neumann* are on the whole talented, personably decent writers, one in the field of literature, the other in jurisprudence. That is approximately the situation. They work but a little, and talk a lot. This they call 'collective work.' In a definite hierarchy each gives the other some chatter and then they conclude—this they call Community. I talked to Grossmann briefly for the first time yesterday at a Horkheimer University-lecture (whose circle of hearers was for the most part the people in the Institute and their wives, and a few confused students—more or less Stalinist influenced, far under the intellectual level of your circle in Chicago)" (182-184).

Ten days later Korsch writes Mattick again and complains that "seldom in my life have I had such a fatal impression of absolute pussyfootedness (*Feigheit*) and limitless egotism as in a conversation I had with Grossmann over you" (185). He then complains that the Institute has accepted two of his articles for their journal,[5] but they have "depoliticized and castrated their form to the point of non-recognition. . . *everything political* has been completely crossed out—even the motto from Marx has to be eliminated because mottoes are not allowed in the journal—even the long sentence on page 1 which contains *a commitment to the materialist concept of history* was eliminated; such things cannot be said in the journal except perhaps in a verbally-radical contribution by Horkheimer himself!" (186-187).

Korsch then complains that he again talked to Horkheimer about the book on

5. Korsch is referring to "Economics and Politics in Revolutionary Spain," and to an article on Pannekoek's "Lenin as a Philosopher," which were not published by the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, but did appear in *Living Marxism*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dialectics, but that they refused to discuss the financial aspects of it. "I believe that after my visit they value my work much more than before; I was treated so politely and indulgently without interruption like never before, and considerably helped them in the few days with the clarification of their own 'problems'; I read through articles and criticized them and so on. What is bad, however, is that in my estimation Horkheimer will not begin the book for a year. Almost everyone (in the small circle in question) is already speaking of the plan. There are many *life-lies* (in the sense of Ibsen's *Wild Duck*) here: they *will* write a book—*the* book—on *Dialectics*—all that sounds very intoxicating as music of the future which skips over the emptiness of the present. It is hardly as simple as you imply in reference to the 'New School': 'all business.' For *these* people real business is dissolved in advance; the way they live, none of them has less than $1000 a month... [they are characterized by] feelings of inferiority plus cultivatedness, bound up with cowardice, desire for security, and petty reciprocal jealousy" (188). At this point Korsch breaks off his tirade, apologizes to Mattick for burdening him with these "psychological considerations" and then turns to a discussion of the "world situation." Needless to say nothing came out of Korsch's discussion on collaborating on the great book on dialectics which appeared in part in Horkheimer's and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man.*

Korsch's evaluation of the totalitarian domination by capital and the corporate state in advanced industrial society is amazingly similar in some respects to the analyses of Horkheimer, Adorno and Marcuse. These theories were developed in the 1930s and 1940s under the dual impact of the triumph of fascism and exposure to the new conditions of life in the emerging U.S. late capitalist society. In a letter to Paul Partos, accompanied by a document, "On American Science" (written at the end of July, 1939), Korsch writes: "America is truly different from Europe, certainly from the 'old' Europe in which we all lived, worked, and engaged in our struggles" (227). In Europe one had a relatively clear conception of State and Society, the possibilities for social change and how one could participate in this process. In Europe, "One stood within a movement with a well-known past that led from a familiar present to a sufficiently known future. One had a theory which one could relate to 'critically' at will, precisely because one stood so firmly in it." In America, however, "everything is too big, too wide, too incomprehensible, too dispersed to enable one to take a similar position." Moreover, "the isolated individual feels himself too small, too powerless, and too unknowing in view of the largeness, multiplicity, and changeability of the general process." Both individuals and groups found themselves in an "indeterminate" situation confronted with "unlimited possibilities:" "an abstract infinity and freedom exists for everyone and for no one." Both the sciences and general conditions in America were subject to incredible change and the proliferation of novelty, making it impossible to get a firm grasp of things: "The constant change of investigated facts, the uncovering of new regions, the discovery of new methods, and the instant classification of all countertendencies, the neutralization of all abnormality and illegality, the instrumentalization of business, politics, corruption, violence, criminality—all this is so much taken for granted that the eruption of novelty in science signifies neither conflict nor tension but only the daily fulfilling of the moving principle—whereby fundamentally it doesn't matter much whether the new is truly new, since in the unceasing transition from what is now familiar to 'something new' the old and everyday will always be discovered again as new" (223). Hence "change" itself is the principle of American science.

In this situation of flux and seeming novelty a critical theory seems to have lost its purpose and foundation. Korsch has intimations here of Marcuse's one-dimensionality

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

where all the classical contradictions of capitalism are stabilized in an unholy harmony, "despite all fluctuations on the surface, there is no dangerous crisis-like state, no conflict that isn't neutralized, no idea that is not at once ideologized and welcomed as a novelty by the dominant ideology." All this simultaneous change and stability comes about "under the appearance of true progress," but it is really just monopoly capitalism reproducing itself, creating a confusing garden of earthly delights for consumption to provide "Prosperity overlasting" (or everlasting?)—which means in effect higher profits and more efficient social control for the monopolists. "A science that is institutionalized along with an institutionalized Big Capital produces in one and the same way a new form of social demand. In this way monopoly capitalism reproduces here in its cornucopia once again the fortunate constellation from the early time of competitive capitalism: 'The sciences blossom, the arts prosper, it is a joy to live'."

As for politics in America, Korsch can discover no point of insertion for his left-oppositionalist tendency. "One can only say and do here what is false, misunderstood, incomprehensible, if one does not wish to limit oneself to the Sisyphian task of struggling against the poisoning work of the Communist Party" (225). Struggling against American reformist, bureaucratized, and corrupt unions, as against the Communist Party, would only in any case serve the interests of the bourgeoisie against labor. (Horkheimer was later to take a similar position.) The various political groups merely engage in a confused "tug of war" against each other, without the prospect of any decisive victory that will aid the working class. Yet, Korsch tried to analyze the economic and political situation in America, contributed articles to leading Marxist journals, gave lectures to workers and university people throughout his travels in the United States, and maintained close contact with Paul Mattick and the group of council communists—but had little hope of any possibility of real radical change or effective political activism. "What Paul Mattick does as the most active man in our tendency," Korsch writes to Partos, "appears too isolated, too short-term for me to get involved with it" (226).

For the last twenty years, Korsch notes, the "unresolved task of the revolutionary" was to seek a way that would be more than a mere "complement" to the communist party: "The single historically real contribution here is that of the Spanish anarchists and you know better than anyone how short-lived and painful even this historically best contribution to the solution to the general task came out" (226). The final result of twenty years of class struggle was, in Korsch's view, a string of defeats: "The entire past labor movement in all its forms has really only prepared internal-capitalist progress, that is presently introduced in counterrevolutionary form through 'fascism' and on a world scale is executed and secured through all capitalist systems" (226). Thus, although Korsch continues to maintain that the working class has a "potentially revolutionary significance," he concedes that "phenomenally" it may well have a counterrevolutionary significance (227)—another position that Marcuse was later to defend. This state of affairs forced Korsch to question Marxist theory of revolution in "Ten Theses on Marxism Today."

The letters published in this volume contain much more valuable information, and no doubt the remaining unpublished letters will also be an indispensable aid in reconstructing Korsch's life and work. It may thus still be premature to take any final position on the late Korsch until all his letters and manuscripts are published. They may contain some surprises and may force us to reconsider a political theorist whose work is increasingly turning out to be one of the most interesting bodies of revolutionary thought in our time.

Douglas Kellner

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Maynard Solomon, ed. *Marxism and Art: Essays Classic and Contemporary.* New York: Vintage, 1974. xvii plus 649 pages.

With the appearance of Maynard Solomon's illuminating anthology, *Marxism and Art*, it becomes necessary to critically re-examine the relationship between Marxism and aesthetics and to move beyond certain aspects of a "traditional" Marxist understanding of art towards a new critical aesthetics. Solomon's own intuition of this possibility is apparent when he wonders whether, in reading *Marxism and Art*, "we will also have journeyed beyond the legitimate aesthetic implications of Marxism—whether the more imaginative, dialectical, and Utopian theories of some modern Marxists are to be seen as departures from a congealed system, or whether they are in fact unfoldings, confirmations, and restorations of the original but latent content of Marxism..."[1] To raise such a possibility is to point to the fact that (1) there is no longer consensus over what "Marxism" is and (2) there seems to be something in aesthetics which forces to the surface certain tensions within Marxism or between various Marxist traditions. Solomon's own interests obviously lean towards the utopian suggestiveness of some of Marx's statements; out of his predilection for the most radical in Marx, he has opened up once again the possibility of an aesthetics which is both critically and socially responsible without being necessarily bound to the Marxist tradition(s) itself.

When Solomon refers to "the latent content" of Marxism, I think he is referring to particular statements by Marx concerning the transcendence of the prevailing historical-productive order and the character of life in a "post-historical" world. And yet, although Marx's own understanding rested on a sense of the possibilities of life denied by his own era, he became preoccupied with understanding how things were in mid-nineteenth century Europe. For the most part, the Marxist tradition has, like Marx himself, minimized interest in the "other" and has concentrated on the manifest subject of Marx (economic-productive relations), while ignoring Marx's rather sparse suggestions regarding the fulfillment of history in the merging of the sensuous and rational in man.[2] Given my conclusion that art tends to *maximize* an interest in the "other," there would seem to be potential areas of conflict between the weight of emphasis in Marx's preoccupations (and the quite unimaginative historical mainstream of Marxist thinking) and aesthetics itself. Without an acknowledgement of Marx's utopianism, there can be no adequate Marxist aesthetics; for recent (post-eighteenth century) art seems to speak on behalf of what is not, either in a searching, investigative way (Tolstoy, Flaubert, Lawrence, Hardy) or negatively (Dostoevsky, Céline, Kafka) or in tentative affirmations (Shelley, Schiller, Wordsworth) or in variations on these possibilities. To put this very schematically, Marx and Marxism have been preoccupied with what Freud called the Reality Principle and its historical manifestations while art has been preoccupied with the frustration and tentative prophetic expressions of the Pleasure Principle in history and beyond given history. The perspective of Marx and art approximate each other at those points where Marx is most un-"Marxist," i.e., least concerned with forms of economic-productive relations

1. Solomon, pp. xiv-xv. Further references to this work appear in parentheses in the text.

2. Marxist analysis is still pre-occupied with categories which became dominant in mid-nineteenth century Europe and which reveal that era's own obsessions with progress, production, domination, labor, economics, and nature as an alien dimension. These categories are part of the *material* of that epoch and, to a certain extent, a good part of Western history, but they seem grossly inadequat as *critical tools* by which to understand and transcend the material itself. For a recent investigation of related problems in Marx's work, see Albrecht Wellmer, *Critical Theory of Society* (New York, 1974).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and most concerned with a dimension of life beyond that determined primarily by these relations.[3]

Certain forms of creation and critical recreation—and not just those of the bourgeois era—rely heavily on individual emotional and imaginative experience. Aesthetic experience originates in what and how particular men create and how particular men experience what is created. Creation and the "reception" of created objects is grounded in embodied experience, although some forms, like the novel, insist on this more emphatically than other forms. "Basic aesthetic facts are largely immediacies (such as feelings, emotions, sensations, intuited forms) and," Stephen Pepper continues, "aesthetic writers are constantly presenting their descriptions of these immediacies as indubitable and then blandly drawing critical consequences as if they thought their feet were set upon the pillars of the firmament."[4] And inasmuch as each artistic creation seems to want to reach into us, to come into touch with our memories and feelings, we could say with John Dewey that: "A new poem is created by every one who reads poetically—not that its *raw* material is original. . . but that every individual brings with him, when he expresses his individuality, a way of seeing and feeling that in its interaction with old material creates something new, something previously not existing in experience."[5] Thus, there is a certain (often denied) autobiographical element in the re-creation and criticism of art, an element to which art—especially the literature of the bourgeois era—gives a particular emphasis.

One can talk about the alienation of the artist and the experiencer and the increasing privatization of art in the bourgeois era. But such art dialectically forces consciousness into new realms. In part, it brings to the foreground the issue of our times: "It asks us if we are content with ourselves, if we are saved or damned—more than with anything else, our literature is concerned with salvation."[6] Lionel Trilling's meaning is quite unmystical: is our life in touch with our needs? This autobiographical element will influence judgments which later, in the guise of theoretical generalizations, may appear to be more objectively founded than they actually are: Lukács' self-delusory "objective" defense of Thomas Mann, criticism of Franz Kafka, and absolute avoidance of D.H. Lawrence is a case in point. When Lukács writes that a scientific aesthetics "seeks to free itself from all anthropological, sensual and mental determinations, and. . . endeavours to portray all objects and their relations as they are in themselves, independent of consciousness" (415) he is proposing an attitude towards art (and the world in general) which has been all too common in the Marxist tradition.[7] Behind the attitude is a distrust of subjectivity, a distrust which abandons

3. I should make it clear that when I refer to "art," I am refering primarily but not exclusively to the novel, post-eighteenth century Western poetry, and to some aspects of the Western tradition in painting.

4. Stephen C. Pepper, *The Basis of Criticism In the Arts* (Cambridge, 1965), p. 5.

5. John Dewey, *Art As Experience* (New York, 1958), p. 108. That this is not only an aesthetic of the capitalist era is suggested by Stanley Diamond's comment that the primitive shaman or "poet-thinker" (Paul Radin's term) "shaped dramatic forms through which the participants were able to clarify their own conflicts and more readily establish their own identities." *In Search of the Primitive: A Critique of Civilization* (New Brunswick, 1974), p. 199. Once art becomes institutionalized or becomes attached to specific groups within a stratified society, the case changes drastically. By their emphasis on the primarily communal, practical, and or celebratory functions of art in primitive society, critics like Fischer and Caudwell tend to concentrate on institutionalized forms. Caudwell often writes as if "society" and not persons created oral literatures.

6. Lionel Trilling, *Beyond Culture* (New York, 1968), p. 8.

7. Lukács' aparently "objective" understanding of the novel, inasmuch as some aspects of that understanding have value, must have been developed in spite of his consciousness of himself: "I must say that I am perhaps not a very contemporary man. I can say that I have never felt frustration

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dialectics with haste. Lukács' reaction to "modernism" and Caudwell's reaction to Lawrence are cases in point where a sex-negative and experience-negative bias is displayed in the rationalizing guise of a "scientific" world view.

It is perhaps due to this awareness of, this art-induced sensitivity to, the facts of subjective experience, emotional involvement and bias that leads Solomon to take a quite un-Marxist interest in the biographical dimensions of the Marxist-aesthetics problematic. I say "un-Marxist" because the Marxist tradition has persisted, following Marx, in repressing or simply ignoring the biographical element within itself. Lee Baxandall seems ambivalently aware of this when he writes that: "For our methodology and other assumptions to be conscious and adequate, they too, like literature itself, must be subjected to a thorough and authentic historical scrutiny."[8] What Baxandall might include in "historical" is hard to judge although my own argument is for a self-scrutiny of the forthright and often uncomfortable self-analytic kind which treats the self as both in and more than the historical continuum. One need not make a fetish of "biography" in aesthetic response in order to claim a place for it which at least modern aesthetics demands. Admitting this qualification, the point still stands: aesthetic experience in its initial stages reaches into the subject and confronts it both in its conditioned aspects, its own "armouring," and in its inner, acultural aspects. And experience can persist on into the later, speculative stages of aesthetics and serve as a judge, along with the "text," of what speculation and theory concludes.

The denial of the experiential element within the Marxist tradition points, as Solomon shows, to a suppression of or anxiety over the implications of aesthetic issues. Marx, like many in his time, aspired to be a poet—a "romantic" one at that. But in his youth he writes worriedly to his father about the "shapeless expressions of unnatural feeling" which he finds in his work. About this time he burned many of his manuscripts, a reaction to creative work not uncommon among even well-known artists who apparently want to purge part of themselves. Marx then plunged into Hegel and became a "serious" student. Engels also subordinated his interest in the work of Byron and Shelley to materialist theory and analysis outside himself. Although growing up within it, both Marx and Engels tended to turn away from the Romantic tradition or, more accurately, concentrate their "romanticism" on the narrower problem of the historical future. They tended toward the Enlightenment (rational and deliberately self-realizing) view of man and of the past (also dialectically rational and tending progressively towards a utopian completion). In their later work there is still some room within their theoretical formulations for those aspects of aesthetics which concern "production" (*social* creativity) and the relation between thought (and imagination) and practice, but there is little attention given to the peculiar experiential, receptive aspects of aesthetics. They focus on the practical, instructive, and historically useful elements in literature.[9]

---

or any kind of complex in my life. I know what they mean, of course, from the literature of the twentieth century [just *this* literature?], and from having read Freud. But I have not experienced them myself." Lukács, "An Unofficial Interview," *New Left Review*, 68 (July-August 1971), p. 58.

8. Baxandall, "The Marxist Orientation to Art and Literature," *New German Critique*, 3 (Fall 1974), p. 166.

9. There are exceptions to all this: Engels is often sensitively aware on aesthetic subjects as in his discussion of artistic conscious purpose in Balzac, and he typically alters his rather puritan and practical tone on aesthetic subjects when he discusses the work of his poet-friend, Georg Weerth. Lee Baxandall and Stefan Morawski, eds., *Marx and Engels on Literature and Art* (St. Louis, 1973).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Art forces the realization that man-in-history is himself problematic, a fact which is downgraded in Marx by his concentration on social-material history and his attribution to that history, via Hegel, of a seeming rationality. Art simultaneously forces utopian possibilities into the foreground of history, the negative wish for the other, and illuminates the restraints on their achievement. By tending to adjust art to certain assumptions and conclusions of his world view, Marx works around the "restraints" signified by consciousness-unconsciousness, culture, ideology, displaced wishes and needs, and body armouring (Reich). And although these are "modern" interests, their avoidance even in terms comprehensible to Marx has presented major problems with his own prophecies and understanding of man's species being.

Further cases of the Marxist-aesthetics tension are not hard to find. Karl Kautsky, somewhat like Caudwell, wrote in his youth and kept to himself several apparently autobiographical novels and theater pieces. Lenin's hyper-sensitivity to music, especially his infamous remarks regarding the *Appassionata*, is not simply a case of self-denial for the sake of the revolution, as Solomon would have it, but suggestive of deeply rooted characterological and ideological-historical contradictions which have serious implications for an understanding of the determinant roots of the Russian revolution. Lenin's comments on music point not just to his character but also to a broader context of conflicts between sensitivity and social *praxis* and to the inherent failings of any revolution which cannot adequately comprehend and integrate the categories of sensitivity and happiness in their *praxis*. The emphasis in art, especially the novel, on the "wish" and its defeat and the immense problems which such a process implies for revolutionary thinking—this emphasis which is circumvented by Marx and denied by Lenin is made manifest in its implications and immediately fought with rigid and anxious moral standards in Zhdanovism.

Solomon inaccurately calls Zhdanovism "a temporary aberration of Marxist criticism" (235) and claims that it has "no roots in Marxism itself" (237). Yet Zhdanovism does have a context, one which exists outside Marxism in sex-negative Western culture and, implicitly, within Marxism. Out of sex-negative moral outrage, Zhdanovism views subjectivity and art's roots in embodied, libidinous experience as dire sins. This negative recognition of the experiential roots of art leads, as Zhdanovism intuitively knows, to quite unidealistic conclusions regarding human "nature" and thus to severe qualifications of revolutionary utopianism, or a brand of utopianism which ignores the need for a corresponding revolution *within and in touch with the person*. Solomon points unawares to the shift in thinking promoted by Zhdanovism when he writes that it represents "a deeply rooted fear of art which can only be fully understood as a psychological rather than as an economic category" (238). Economic-productive categories, the determining categories of the Russian revolution and Marx's own sense of practice in "pre-history," create the illusion that historical process is socially rational, that biography-psychology can be subsumed in productive modes. But as Zhdanovism negatively recognized, art will have none of this; it is too true to the copmlex experiential and material aspects of actually being alive in the world. Zhdanovism also re-emphasizes the "forgotten" dimension of experience in Marxism by its personalized and frightened response to sexuality; it reveals the body and experience in the process of denying both. When Solomon writes that the repression of sexuality (I would add: embodied experience) "turned pathological with Zhdanovism" (238), he has arrived indirectly at my own point: the repressed attempts to return in pathological, aberrational forms.[10] Zhdanovism represses the experiential

10. At one point Solomon calls Zhdanovism a "crude materialism" (265) but later and more

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

substrata of historical processes and reacts with horror to that which refuses to pliably and immediately accommodate itself to the idealistic directives of social-historical planning. I am not suggesting that Marx or Marxism is sex-negative but rather that neither Marx nor the Marxist tradition has taken seriously the experiential components of being alive in history and that such a limitation reappears as anxious astonishment when psyche and body will not adjust themselves to idealistic, disembodied, and de-personalized historical agendas which have ignored them.

There have been qualified exceptions to this anti-experiential and often anti-aesthetic bias in the Marxist tradition. Franz Mehring's "conversion" to Marxism, as Solomon puts it, coincided with an increased interest in aesthetic subjects and an attempt to bring together Marxism and the romantic-idealist German tradition in aesthetics. Rosa Luxemburg separated her interest in literature from her Marxism and retained what amounts to a severely revised Marxist sense of creativity in relation to historical process. Anatoly Lunacharsky's qualified insights into the dynamic between an artist's social position, his character, and his body life are extremely advanced given the heritage of his world view. The same can be said for Mikhail Bakhtin's interests in the subversive potential of body play and humor in art. The Frankfurt School also abandons the fetishistic immersion in economic-productive relations and is able to approach art itself. These relations, these given and manifest forms of social existence, now become subject to a far more complex criticism, not only in their own social-economic terms but also in terms of a far more radical and still undeveloped criteria: the needs, limits, and potential of embodied playful, laboring, imaginative, individual and social, sexual women and men in themselves. As Solomon points out, the necessary task of "drawing together the psychological implications of Marxism" still waits to be undertaken on a major level (519) or, again, "the deeper one plunges into sociology, the more necessary psychology becomes" (313).

A serious treatment of these issues brings new problematic material into the context of social-historical analysis. There are two inter-related issues within this material, the first of which becomes important in Solomon's discussions and the second as a consequence of those discussions. The first concerns the relationship between what Freud termed the Pleasure Principle and the Reality Principle: between, on the one hand, play, imagination and fantasy, childhood, the unconscious, libido, and memory, and, on the other, that dimension of "reality" which concerns "necessary" tasks in the face of Nature plus the requirements of social organization and the body itself. The second concerns historical process once the Pleasure and Reality principles are seen as part of that process. As some Marxists realize, the emphases and conclusions of Marx's work have now to be critically revised to suit a broader context which includes the fact that (Western) history is an edifice built out of and over the (literally and figuratively) mangled erotic "body" and experience of men and women.

Marx's concern was with the critical understanding of social process (the Reality Principle), while in the face of historical appearances, art preserves or at least makes more conspicuous an allegiance to the Pleasure Principle. Marx's subject is repressive history; art's subject is the history of the repressed. As such, art transcends the given historical moment, the given historical form of repression, by its deeper allegiance to the repressed itself which "views" the various forms of repression as relatively identical but increasingly coercive. Marx's subject involves the dynamics of repressive

correctly he says that Zhdanovism defines man without reference to his biological existence by splitting the species into "higher" and "lower" components and casting the "lower" in the form of the beast (193). Zhdanovism is a form of idealism in the best tradition of body-hating Western culture.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(alienating, disembodying) history inasmuch as they can be understood within the labor-productive-economic process. All history (i.e., pre-history) is "ultimately" (but not only) determined by these categories of process. The conclusions of modern aesthetics lead in quite different directions although directions which are not denied by Marx's undeveloped utopian speculations.

It comes as no surprise that the "rebellious" laborer Prometheus is Marx's culture-hero: "Prometheus is the most eminent saint and martyr in the philosophical calendar..." (520), so Marx writes in his dissertation and continues to believe throughout his life. Prometheus is the Oedipally-suffering bringer of culture, the "law" against the "personal" rule of the fathers, revolt in the service of a "new" culture which takes the form of activity (as labor) in the world and against nature as a coincident repression of the sexual-erotic sources of this activity. The revolt is carried on in the father's terms: painful and lifelong labor against the past and against authority with no realization of self-as-body beyond surplus pain and sacrifice and dutiful cultural re-building. Revolt over power with labor as means: the politics of labor. As Marcuse points out, the sexuality of the myth is productive, practical, socially and culturally purposeful. Sexuality in itself, as the eroticized body experiencing itself for itself, is perceived as disruptive and destructive. There is perhaps an ahistorical tension between body needs and social-productive organization (which Freud tends to elevate to a principle of historical stasis) but, even given this possibility, it is also true that the body and Pleasure Principle, unlike the dimensions of the Reality Principle, have seldom had their *own* voices in history: "Europe has two histories: a well-known, written history and an underground history. The latter consists in the fate of the human instincts and passions which are displaced and distorted by civilization."[11] Until the "instincts and passions" have at least a semblance of their own voice, it would be premature to accept the clichés concerning Prometheus and the equation revolution-equals-sacrifice which have been carried through history on the left wing of culture. (Shelley, by the way, breaks with the myth by not only reconciling Prometheus and Asia as erotic, loving figures but also by dropping them out of the last act of *Prometheus Unbound*, dropping them out of a world preoccupied with history and social forms.) So I would argue that the radical utopian needs to reject the myth's lessons inasmuch as they affirm the building of society and culture over the mutilated and denied bodies of the builders.

Marx's own attraction seems two-fold: he finds appealing both the rebellious Prometheus (a questionable interpretation) and the laboring, culture re-building Prometheus. His idealization of the tortured hero screens us from the promise of pain in the myth or at least attempts to make the pain rational.[12] But in the pain is the body and Marx's statement that "the nobility of man shines upon us from their work-hardened bodies"[13] is questionable. It is the mind-body and not the Working Man which suffers pain (and longs for pleasure), a plain materialist fact which Marx does not always seem to have remembered and which the "heads" of Marxist revolutionary practice have tended to file away for the future. In his particular attraction to Prometheus, the Actor in History, Marx circumvents the problems of the fate of pleasure in revolution and the fate of Eros in history.

11. Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. John Cumming (New York, 1972), p. 231.

12. There is perhaps a slight truth in Adorno's harsh comment that if Marx had had his way, the entire world would have been turned into a "giant workhouse." Cited in Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination* (Boston, 1973), p. 259.

13. Baxandall and Morawski, p. 132.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In Marx's repeated notion that social existence determines consciousness, one can sense a submergence or engulfment by society and history which permits of little if any existence outside or beyond that which is given. Language is also engulfed by social circumstance for Marx, a point re-emphasized by Bukharin and Caudwell and made even more obvious in contemporary culture. Imagination reveals to us that we lack an adequate language of our own. And sense and practical experience makes explicit to us that we are engulfed by an environment only minimally of our own making. Yet art seems to both seek out and make breaks in this solid horizon of slogans and deadening rhythms and monumental landscapes...and reveals the processes whereby these breaks, these moments of possibility, can be re-sealed in an aura of punishment and guilt. In literature, physical and imaginative experience reaches tentatively beyond the immediate field of submergence to other possibilities, an inward and outward questing which can be an act of fantastic reflection, "innocent" or adamant or raging negation, or an experiential process in which the given social-cultural conditions are reduced to a minimum (if not momentarily obliterated) and the person is finally *with* herself, *is* himself.[14] The possibility of moving beyond the Promethean alternative often coincides with fulfilling sexual experiences in which, to draw on Reich, the character armour, the embodiment of forms of the prevailing ideological structures, may be broken through by erotic and acultural "energy," an experience which can give the sensation of freedom and serve as the momentary means of eclipsing that which denies fulfillment. Solomon himself broaches the issue of "energy" in his discussion of the theories of Alick West. But, like West, Solomon appears to gravitate towards a mystifying theory of energy which has its "roots" in "cooperative and communistic" social relations (494-495). Such a theory has nothing to do with Freud's libido theory or Reich's energy in that it displaces the *embodied* sources of feeling and need into society and extinguishes the possibility of contradiction between embodied need and social responses to need. Social "energy" begs the question of its origins. Such experiences as embodied sexual fulfillment--and it is them and not the deadening production-line to which the novelist wisely turns—serve as both a paradigm for and an actual act of liberation against a social order which negates the body and denies the wholeness of body-psyche, which proposes alienation as the necessary state of things. The body's mis-uses in repressive history are variable but the body as potential source and prophecy of gratification in itself, of wholeness or dis-alienation (Morawski), seems to maintain a *certain* constancy throughout history.[15] I think Lionel Trilling is pointing to the historically hidden recesses to which art can refer when he writes that: "We reflect that somewhere in the child, somewhere in the adult, there is a hard, irreducible, stubborn core of biological urgency, and biological necessity, and biological *reason*, that culture cannot reach and that reserves the right, which sooner or later it

14. Much of Romantic and lyric poetry will provide examples of the first possibility; the work of Dostoevsky and Gogol and Céline the second possibility; and moments in *Madame Bovary, Lady Chatterley's Lover, Anna Karenina,* or *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* as the third possibility.

15. I am reminded of a remark by R.D. Laing who posited that the historical mother is always faced with her "stone-age" baby. R.D. Laing, *The Politics of Experience* (Harmondsworth, 1967), p. 50. In the common emphasis on historical process and social conditioning, there is a tendency to forget that there is such a thing as birth and childhood and memory and the fact that each child "forces" adult society, particularly in our era, to re-affirm and re-rationalize certain of its own assumptions. Children present a constant challenge to which bourgeois society, in its negative search for models of what is other than itself, has ambivalently reacted, from Blake and Jeremy Bentham to Freud and the regressive sentimentalities expressed in contemporary idealizations of childhood.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

will exercise, to judge the culture and resist and revise it."[16] The body represents the persistent possibility of a break with the submerged self and self's society.

Here are other grounds for considering the transcendent impulse of art and for viewing actual transcendence in the world. Marx's vehicle of initial transcendence is the proletariat, a notion which I think confuses those who embody the extremities of suffering with those who could change the world. If the person is more or less a "structural" imitation or "personalization" of the prevailing ideology which "adjusts" body to the productive process, as Marx and Reich both suggested, then to ask the person to change that which duplicates himself (that which makes man a duplicate of itself) is to propose the unlikely if not the impossible. Grounds for change, if change is possible, would then seem to reside outside the prevailing social reality and its introjections and "inside" the person. We can begin to break the stone walls of domineering reason by realizing that stone-age, ahistorical core of "biological *reason*" in ourselves in relationships with particular others. Perhaps in this context we can understand Marx's apparently outlandish remark that "the world has long dreamed of something of which it only has to become conscious in order to possess it in actuality" (58). The quality of this radical consciousness needs to be at once receptive and willing to venture against, to resist, that which would again force the disappearance of the "dream." Such a process of discovery and struggling with often unwanted receptivity and counterfeit forms of the dream will be found traced in the great novels. The "class" which the great novels suggest will *presage* the "end" of history as we have known it in the Western world and will be composed of those persons who are receptive to the reason of the body.[17]

Integral to an understanding of the body and art is the notion of play, an issue

16. Trilling, p. 115. Adorno gets at the historical dialectic behind Trilling's comment: "The historical crisis of the individual has, for the time being, its limits in the biological individual, which is its scene and setting. Thus the changing flow of situations. . . meeting no resistance on the part of individuals, ends only with the stubbornness of their bodies to which they have regressed." Adorno, "Towards An Understanding of ENDGAME," in *Twentieth Century Interpretations of ENDGAME*, ed. Bell Gale Chevigny (Englewood Cliffs, 1969), p. 97. Trilling's "stubborn core" also appears repeatedly in Wilhelm Reich, *The Function of the Orgasm*, trans. Vincent R. Carfagno (New york, 1973), pp. 7, 18, 174, 233. It appears implicitly in Marcuse's "On Hedonism" (1938), and his 1937 essay on "affirmative culture" and 1948 essay on Sartre.

17. To suggest, as some contemporary pundits have done, that the body is *the* royal road to a radically altered future seems to me limited and naive. On the other hand, it is far too easy in our culture and in the context of social theory to under-estimate the subversive dimensions of subjectivity and the body. Russell Jacoby, following an emphasis in the Frankfurt School, has argued that there is "no" subjectivity, that at the "bottom" of subjectivity as seen by critical theory is "society," that theory is now confronted with a "subject-less subject." In Jacoby's vision of co-opted subjectivity, therapy and self-analysis and the radicalizing mutual aid of some "encounter" groups become completely obsolete, exchanges over that which doesn't exist. Russell Jacoby, "Negative Psychoanalysis and Marxism: Towards An Objective Theory of Subjectivity," *Telos*, 14 (Winter 1972). But Erica Sherover, in her review of Jacoby's *Social Amnesia*, poses the logical but "provocative" possibility: ". . . one would have to ask whether some sort of therapy may not be a necessity in order to uncover or plant the roots of radical social change in the individual. That is, to the extent that human beings have introjected the needs and values of a repressive mass society, precisely to this extent therapy (as a way of undoing this introjection) may be required in order to escape from what Marcuse has called a '*psychic* Thermidor'." Sherover, *Telos*, 25 (Fall 1975), p. 208. If there is any truth in Reich's conclusions that society is also in the body, in its armouring, then Sherover's "counter-therapy" would logically extend in the direction of the body. Reich constantly implies what is also apparent in many novels, that the body can "advance" where institutional change cannot. Further: Reich proposes that a more fulfilling sexuality often corresponds in the person with a more rational, life-affirming (i.e. critical) understanding of society. Reich, pp. 175-181. Reich was fully aware of the necessity of social transformation before a "healthy" sexuality could be sustained and generalized but he was also aware that one of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which Solomon raises in his important introduction to Plekhanov's discussion of the same subject. Discussing the theories of Karl Bücher and others, Plekhanov arrives at a significant dead-end: "If play is indeed older than labor and if art is indeed older than the production of useful objects, then the materialist explanation of history, at any rate as expounded by the author of *Capital, will not stand up to the criticism of the facts* and all my reasoning must be turned upside down; I shall have to argue about the dependence of economics on art..." (142). Plekhanov, one might predict, is about to argue no such thing. Play in childhood, he concludes, is actually an imitation of utilitarian adult activity. But in children's play, there is not only imitation (and often quite freely interpreted imitation) but also the apparent desire to follow through, without any apparent prior commitment to specific ends, a series of activities which lead in unpredictable and quite unadult directions. It is adults who contribute many of the constructive (laboring) aspects to children's play. However, it will not do to divide play and "labor" in childhood in the manner we experience them as divided in adulthood; rather, activity in childhood seems to be an encountering of "reality" on behalf of the pleasure principle whereas activity in adulthood seems to be an encountering of "reality" via an extended detour in which labor becomes the demanded means and pleasure the receding goal. Again, Prometheus seems to be diverted by the "means" whereas the poets remember the "goal" itself.

Solomon points to Marx's distinction between "primitive instinctive forms of labor" and true human labor. True human labor, Solomon says following Marx, is rooted in imagination, which responds to need, and realizes its essence in the non-alienated completion of the imagined act in the labor process. Solomon concludes: "Play is the dialectical coordinate of labor. The *creative* element of labor is the imagination, the free 'play' of man's 'bodily and mental powers' " (123). Marx does discuss labor in such terms but it is not this form of the labor process which he claims is at the base of historical (as pre-history) process. In fact historical labor, for the most part and particularly in the capitalist era, has been one which Marx associates with instinctive, mechanical forms of body activity. If the playful, imaginative, self-determining aspects of production have been stripped away from the labor process, and if this condition is to be transcended, then it appears that that sphere of activity which preserves the promise of "true" human activity becomes a primary determining factor in transcending pre-history. Apparently, history has forced a truth out of Plekhanov's "false" conclusion. Economics does become "dependent," in part, on art and the modes of activity behind art.

A further problem is raised by the Plekhanov-Solomon exchange. To Plekhanov's notion of "older" and more recent forms of activity, Solomon responds with: "To argue priority is ultimately non-dialectical" (123). Within the flux of social history, it is no longer a matter of "priority" but rather interdependence and contradiction. But this is still to operate only on the manifest appearances of *social*-historical process, on those (productive) processes which have an apparent rationality and power of their own making. Such a limitation can easily lead one to equating dialectics and history with "progress"—an equation Marx accepted from Hegel but which has finally been recognized, by the Frankfurt School and others, as untenable. If an historically somewhat constant or distinct and radical influence exists via the body-psyche (libidinous activity and imagination) which is always "prepared" to return to history, and if Solomon is correct in saying that to argue priority is ultimately undialectical,

essential means towards this transformation was the particularized, personalized form of transformation. Cf. Marcuse, "On Hedonism," in *Negations*, trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro (London, 1968), p. 187.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

then it would appear that dialectics, not as critical-descriptive method dealing with manifest social history but rather as critical-utopian method dealing with human history, cannot adequately deal with the body's return to history: the return of the repressed not as pathological, socially-imitative repressed but as (socially critical) "body" itself. It is not whether play is older than labor that is really important but rather that the body, in both its erotic needs and encounters with psyche, remains "old" and the subject to which the project of dis-alienation must be increasingly accommodated. The approximation of human life to interior "nature" and a simultaneous receptivity to exterior "nature" is, as Marcuse has suggested, *the* utopian project. When Marx implies the necessity of a "break" in history, I think he perhaps intuits something like this fact.[18] The "productive forces" in history, as representative of "practical human energy," determine social-historical process and give it its dialectically "rational" appearance (31). But all history is pre-history; the "human" returns to history when the past is transcended, when the body no longer has always to appear as a supplicant at history's feast to be sent back into oblivion or sublimtaed into ornament. A break with the past entails a break with these patterns of denial and an admission of the severe limitations of a social-historical dialectic which excludes the notion of the repressed and asocial "body" itself.

Solomon remarks that play "takes its autonomous modes of action from life processes quite remote from labor" (123). Marx himself seemed to envision a future form of "productive" activity grounded in play or at least a situation in which play and work, divided in Western history, could again be integrated, become "artistic." The apparent autonomy of the sources of the impulse towards play and the pleasure principle (the primary process) is a conclusion forced upon us by the prevailing and seemingly timeless division between play and labor. That they need be so divided or that there need be such a remoteness in the body between the "life processes" leading to play and labor is by no means clear. An alternative to a labor-theory of history is offered by Brown's discussion of play and art in *Life Against Death*, a discussion in which our reality principle now has to confess its responsibility for neurosis and alienation, and accommodate itself to the pleasure principle or be abandoned. Such utopian accommodations are envisioned in art, although the artist tends to be forced outside human life for his paradigms.[19]

As Brown argues, play refers through memory back to childhood, towards the whole polymorphous body, towards the rhythms of the primary process grounded in the

18. Actually Marx seems to typically refer to a prolonged series of revolutions on the way towards a radically different, post-historical reality. I use the term "break" figuratively to point to the radical quality of the changes Marx, at least the younger Marx, envisioned by his terms "revolution," transcendence," overthrow," "dissolution," "emancipation." I am also refering not to a necessarily temporal break but rather an experiential break in the way of life. Engels points in the *Anti-Duhring* to "humanity's leap" and Marx comes close to my own meaning when he writes: "A radical revolution can only be a revolution of radical needs whose preconditions and birthplaces appear to be lacking." *Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society*, ed. and trans. Lloyd D. Easton and Kurt H. Guddat (Garden City, 1967), p. 259. My own insistence on the notion of a break finds confirmation in Horkheimer's essay "The Authoritarian State" (*Telos* 15, p. 12) where he writes that revolution, as he perceives it, "is not a further acceleration of progress, but a qualitative leap out of the dimension of progress. The rational is never totally deducible. It is conceived everywhere in the historical dialectic as the break with class society."

19. Shelley's *The Cloud* is one of the most complete expressions of this. Here play is not threatening "anarchy," that demon of "responsible" social consciousness, but rather embodies a process of generation-re-generation, letting go and re-building, seeing oneself as part of things rather than having to make oneself out of and against things, having the "humor" to acknowledge yourself as tentative, embodied and mortal. It is the lived anarchy of the body, the cloud, at peace with itself and its world.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pleasure principle.[20] The play elements in art, which seem primary to artistic method in a body-denying reality, also refer to the repressed dimensions of life: the playing with conscious thought processes in metaphor, with "meaningful" language in wit, with social relationships in comic over-turnings, with their reality in the creation of my reality, with instrumental purpose in meaningful but purposeless acts. But by no means should the play element in art be seen as analogous only to the pleasurable and beautiful; it is both affirmatively and negatively subversive and often combines both possibilities. One has only to recall the work of Dostoevsky, Gogol, Kafka, and Céline, wherein play is evident as a mode of activity but has taken on a desperate and historically additional significance: the voice of the shipwrecked survivor raging against the world (and self). Rilke comes close to the position of these writers by comparing the artist to "a dancer whose movements are broken by the constraints of his cell. That which finds no expression in his steps and the limited swing of his arms, comes in exhaustion from his lips, or else he has to scratch the unlived lines of his body into the walls with his wounded fingers."[21]

Marxist aesthetics has recently given a rather narrow emphasis to the affirmatively subversive character of art, an emphasis which is perhaps partly in reaction to the traditional Marxist obsession with versions of "realism." Art as negative subversion is an art caught in the nightmarish flux while trying to "comprehend," through theses and overcoats, castles and hallucinatory prose, how it became necessary to abandon realism (a comprehension of the world itself) for a "fantastic" realism which admits that the world's terms are useless, prayers at an execution. The labyrinthian underground constructions of Kafka's burrowing animal—a literalization of Dostoevsky's metaphor and a sign of how history "progresses"—might be an adequate paradigm for artistic creation in our time inasmuch as they both replicate and reveal the schizophrenic character of a reality which threatens, and more than threatens, to take over the artist and which drives him back into (apparently coherent) metaphors of exterior and interior madness which are experienced *in* the metaphor as literalizations of an insane condition. The paranoia of the burrow doubles for the persecutory, life-denying world of the penal colony or Céline's *Journey to the End of the Night*. The art of negative subversion makes maximally coherent reality's minimization of life.

Another possibility in the novel concerns what I have called the body-affirmative novels or those novels which trace the tentative comings to awareness and defeats of that biological reason to which Trilling refers: *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and the tradition behind it. Marxist criticism has never adequately faced the importance of these novels which simultaneously exist in and transcend the prevailing world and many of the sub-currents of Western history.[22] For Marx, labor is *the* historical counterfeit of the body's "true" activity. These novels strain towards a realization in the world of that undeveloped dimension in Marx which envisions the reconciliation of man's life activity with man's body. If Marxism is to discover or rediscover this dimension, it could be aided on its way by a fuller aesthetics which includes these novels. So far there are few signs of a willingness to move in this direction. One finds eithe an aversion towards the body, as in Lukâcs and Caudwell, or a treatment of literature which is so far removed from the *experience* of literature or so pre-occupied

20. Brown, *Life Against Death* (Middletown, 1959), pp. 32-39. On the potentially subversive function of memory, see Ernest Schachtel, *Metamorphosis* (New York, 1959), pp. 284-285.

21. Quoted in Brown, p. 66.

22. One of the few journals which has dealt in critical depth with the categories of "experience," "the body," "culture," and "authority" is *Paunch*, available from the Department of English, SUNY at Buffalo.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with pseudo-illuminating "structures" or so enchanted by theoretical abstractions that the text and its experience remains voiceless—experiencer speaking to himself.[23] Solomon's own contributions to *Marxism and Art* indicate a reversal of these trends but the contents of the book are indicative of a tradition which has down-graded experience and the immediacy of the text. That tradition has shown a persistent reluctance to enter with art into the dialectics of experience, especially with the most experientially challenging form of art, the novel. And the dialectics of experience does not mean that one emerges satisfied from an experience with conclusions one already had at hand prior to the experience. It means taking risks, placing one's past on the line, making vulnerable one's assumptions. Dialectics in experience is interrelationship and change, experiential *praxis*. And as artistic experience and art itself have a kind of fragility which can be bludgeoned into submission by world views and absorbed by stereotype thinking, they depend on a kind of sensibility, a kind of sensitivity, which social reality and strong-man theories of social change would just as soon see abolished. The novels that I have called body-affirmative resist the possibility of this abolition but they still wait to be experienced in the Marxist tradition.

There is much more in Solomon's work that is impossible to mention here. It is undoubtedly one of the most suggestive, task-establishing books related to Marxism to appear for a long time. Part of the book's significance lies beyond its covers in the fact that art is in an historically inherent position of conflict if not contradiction to traditional Marxism. Or, more correctly, the importance of the book lies in what I sense is Solomon's awareness of this fact: art committed to play, the body, human needs, and the pleasure principle, and Marxism immersed in modes of production and rational action and the reality principle. Both in their most utopian forms point to a transcendence of at least the "surplus" determinants in history of these conflicts. "The permanence and greatness of major works of art," Bloch writes, "consist in their operation through a fullness of pre-semblance and of realms of utopian significance" (571). And Marx, from his *Theses on Feuerbach:* "The chief defect of all previous materialism. . . is that the object, actuality, sensuousness is conceived only in the form of the object or perception [*Anschauung*], but not as sensuous human activity. . ."[24] And finally Solomon on Caudwell and, by implication, many other Marxist critics: "Caudwell's greatest weakness as a poetic theorist is precisely in his inability to deal with man as an individual rather than as part of a class, a genus, a genotype, a generalized mankind. . .[for] class man does not write poetry. . ." (320). Art, particularly in its most advanced form as the novel, seems to have "known" its commitment to utopian, sensuous human ends which transcend class and center in the mutual aid of discrete individuals. And Marxism will perhaps be preserved from engulfment in (pre-)history by a sensitive receptivity to art's own commitments.

Tom Morris

23. A recent example of this can be found in essays by Scott Sanders and Lucien Goldmann (*Telos* 18), although the classic model in Marxist literary criticism is Lukács. Goldmann's critical prodedure makes it sound as if good criticism is a matter of colonizing the text with the power of abstractions and supertextual theoretical structures. At least Sanders admits that, when Goldmann reaches his third stage of system-building, he "appeals. . .to quantitative criteria which I find it difficult to apply, except subjectively" (117). Goldmann's method is also reductive in its extreme dependence on quantitative criteria and "essential" or normative patterns in texts and between texts. Novels are the loose baggy monsters they have been called. Goldmann's and Sander's rarefication of the "monster" is tantamount to denying exactly what is peculiar to the form of the novel.

24. Easton and Guddat, p. 400.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Paul K. Feyerabend. *Against Method.* London: New Left Review Books, 1975.

In the last few years Paul Feyerabend has developed an interesting and in some ways important critique of positivist philosophy of science, and in particular, of the Popperian school. It is ironic that it should emanate from a former acolyte of Popper's 'critical rationalism,' and doubly ironic that the position in which Feyerabend ends up should still nevertheless bear the stigmata of Popper's influence.

Popper's characterization of the advance of scientific knowledge as a revolutionary process, whereby theories vigorously compete with each other, the successful ones being the survivors of repeated tests devised by an open, self-critical, scientific community,[1] had already been called into question by Kuhn. Feyerabend, using similar historical evidence and employing similar arguments concerning the 'incommensurability' of theories, develops what appear to be far more radical conclusions, in his attempt to destroy what he sees as the spurious authority of science and to restore its human impulse.

Contrary to philosophy of science dogma, Feyerabend argues that theories in science gain acceptance despite the overwhelming evidence of experience, observation and the senses, and despite their evident absurdity to majority opinion. There is, in fact, no rational way in Popper's sense that competing theories can be compared, accepted and rejected. It is always possible to save the appearances or salvage an ostensibly falsified theory by developing it ad hoc; indeed, ad hoc additions are indispensable to the survival and acceptance of a theory. Nor do scientific theories originate from perceived problems, but instead they may also be generated as a result of accident, play, laziness, etc. Similarly, a theory may achieve widespread acceptance for any number of reasons: accident, taste, social, psychological and political conditions—and, most importantly, the persuasiveness of adherents' propaganda. An entrenched theory is not replaced when it cannot account for the predicted facts, that is, its deficiencies are not revealed in confrontation with 'reality' or the 'facts.' Moreover, there is no theory whatsoever which accounts for the total content of its domain (pp. 56-64). In many cases awkward, anomolous facts are ignored steadfastly or conveniently forgotten.

Galileo's successful support for the Copernical theory is taken to exemplify this.[2] He overcame the resistance of his more conservative opponents, not by gaining their agreement on 'new facts,' but by managing to undermine their theoretical assumptions with his own, through clever propaganda. By this strategy Galileo steered science firmly in the direction of later achievements. Feyerabend maintains every major theoretical innovation in science occurs in principle in the same way, by replacing entrenched assumptions with new conceptions.

Since no theory fits all the facts the appeal to factual corroboration is useless. Theory and facts are not separated; important parts of scientific frameworks are held unconsciously, and therefore observation gets tied to older unexamined layers of

1. Cf. K.R. Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations* (London, 1969). His "The Logic of the Social Sciences," in T.W. Adorno *et al.*, *The Positivist Dispute in German Sociology* (London, 1975), is an excellent short summary of his position. Feyerabend's work has hitherto been scattered throughout various specialist collections and journals: see especially the earlier version of his book, "Against Method," *Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science* Vol. 4 (London, 1970), hereafter cited as AM I.

2. P. Machamer has challenged Feyerabend's account of the Galileo case in detail: "Feyerabend and Galileo," *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science* 4:1 (1973). Feyerabend gives a crushing reply in Appendix II.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

speculation: "...a theory may be inconsistent with the evidence because the evidence is contaminated with unanalysed sensations...antiquated views....backward auxiliary subjects...a straightforward and unqualified judgement of a theory by the 'facts' is bound to eliminate ideas simply because they do not fit into the framework of some older cosmology. Taking experimental results and observations for granted and putting the burden of proof on the theory means taking the observational ideology for granted without having examined it" (p. 67).

A theory gains acceptance as a result of a power struggle between alternatives. The propaganda for the successful, accepted theory creates an 'epistemological illusion' that its content has increased, while as a matter of fact it often actually decreases, before in the long run it gains the strength to survive. It is neither historically correct that competing theories are recorded and displayed alongside each other for independent judgement to pass its verdict on, nor is it logically possible or desirable. The attempt to compare theories independently rules out the possibility of new theory altogether, since judgments with claims to independence are always a guise for support of orthodoxy.

Instead theories confront each other like mutually untranslatable languages, which paradoxically are only fully understood after they have been accepted and used. They formulate problems in their own way; they do not even talk about the same problem. A new theory does not so much take up previously insoluble problems to 'dissolve' them. Another way of putting this is to say Feyerabend regards theories as irreducible totalities. The radical conclusion he draws from this postulate which is also his unique prescription for theoretical advance in science is to "...invent a new conceptual system...that clashes with the msot carefully established observational results and confounds the most plausible theoretical principles, or to import such a system from outside science, from religion, from mythology, from the ideas of incompetents, or the ramblings of madmen" (pp. 67-68). Science proceeds 'counter-inductively,' or in his words, it proceeds according to the principle of 'anything goes.' The only way a theory is found wanting is by criticizing it from within another alternative theory.

Unlike Kuhn, Feyerabend launches a moral and ideological attack on science as well. Science as it has come to be practiced and advocated has an alarming anti-human tendency, according to him. In particular, Popper's demarcation between science and pseudo-science makes science a de-humanizing 'totalitarian' institution, a 'ratio-mania.' To legislate for a human, creative activity, which is what science is, and to force it to conform to a set of timeless inescapable 'rules for the growth of scientific knowledge,' is a restriction on human freedom (chapter 18). Contemporary science is inflexible, dogmatic, humorless, boring, moralistic, obscurantist and over-specialized. Feyerabend fears that if concepts are not continually transcended the evolutionary development of the race is threatened, for there is a constant danger of getting stuck at a particular stage of intellectual development and of losing the opportunity of developing the neurological apparatus.[3] The possibility of a complete break with current orthodoxy is not a logical but an empirical question: we must try it and see.

Since all of the arguments for the demarcation between science and non-science fall to the ground with this viewpoint, the only possible grounds for replacing an old with a new theory are our own taste and judgment. Science is drawn together with art, and this is preferable to having science forced upon us as inescapable and beyond our control. Since Galileo's time science has been alienated from man: "It is good to be

3. Feyerabend, "Consolations for the Specialist," I. Lakatos and A. Musgrave, *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge* (Cambridge, 1970), hereafter cited as "Consolations."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

constantly reminded of the fact that science as we know it today is not inescapable, and that we can construct a world in which it plays no role whatever."[4] Art can be intelligent and informative; science can be pleasing and entertaining and aesthetic criteria are not beyond argument. However, the arts have been much better att developing techniques for examining our most basic assumptions and perceptions.[5] Brecht, Ionesco, the Dadaists and Surrealists are exemplars of the use of effective propaganda techniques which induce changes in the way we view ourselves and the world. They have subtle measures for the discovery of error. Above all the growth of knowledge and of freedom is ensured by the clash of many, tenaciously held, different views: the prescription is to make a hundred theories bloom and see what happens.

Feyerabend's account of the relation between theory and fact in science and of the manner in which theories establish themselves, is a valuable corrective to philosophy of science conventional wisdom. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of his conclusions and recommendations.

To start with, Feyerabend is mistaken in his contention that John Stuart Mill supports his 'counter-induction' principle. The character of Mill's inductivism is exactly the opposite: theory is derived from observation of the facts; and science is sharply demarcated from non-science. It is true that Mill is an ardent advocate of free discussion and criticism, but this does not prevent him from regarding science as a source of objective answers in the 'factual' realm, and therefore from regarding it also as superior to art and ethics in this respect.

Where Feyerabend and Mill do agree, far from lending support to the former, they can both be shown to share a common liberal defect. Mill's *Essay on Liberty* is praised for its insight that individual and social development are nourished by free discussion and untrammeled criticism (p. 20). Mill is presented as a radical and Feyerabend gets very touchy with Mill's critics who contest this.[6] He even brings in Cohn-Bendit, Mao and Luxemburg to support Mill on the necessity of free discussion. But clearly, what these revolutionaries mean by free discussion is to be understood in the context of theories of society which are 'incommensurable' with Mill's. Feyerabend's doctrine has turned into a boomerang, because he has neglected his own principle: with incommensurability the statements and concepts of different theories do not mean the same thing. For example, Mill's 'problem' is the freedom of the individual from interference by the state. Society is seen as a collection of individuals pursuing their interests and regulated by a neutral state.

In contrast, the theory and the problem for Mao, Cohn-Bendit, etc., is quite different. Society is class-dominated, individual freedom under class domination is a myth, and the state is the instrument of the ruling class. Therefore the problem is how to free the proletariat (comprised of individuals it is true), and the solution is revolution, with force if necessary. Plainly this puts severe limits on Feyerabend's demand for free discussion "even of the most absurd views" (in this case the views of the ruling class) and the latter, of course, tend to place limitations on discussion of the absurd views of revolutionaries. Neither party favors free discussion when the chips are down and Feyerabend knows this.[7] He knows, for example, that Mill is not a

4. AM I, p. 90.

5. Feyerabend, "The Theatre as an Instrument for the Criticism of Ideologies," *Inquiry* 10 (Autumn, 1967).

6. AM I, p. 108, note 43; p. 112, note 52 has a vicious attack on one of Mill's critics, R.P. Wolff.

7. "As far as unmistakable counter-revolutionaries and saboteurs of the socialist cause are concerned, the matter is easy: we simply deprive them of their freedom of speech." Mao, *Four Essays in Philosophy*, p. 117, cited in AM I, p. 109.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

proponent of unlimited free discussion in all circumstances and he quotes him on this: "A ruler full of the spirit of improvement is warranted in the use of any expedient that will attain an end perhaps otherwise unattainable. Despotism is a legitimate mode of government in dealing with barbarians, provided the end be their improvement."[8] The despot presumably defines what constitutes 'improvement' and which of the opponents are to be treated as 'barbarians,' whom it is legitimate to suppress. Yet in the same passage, Feyerabend castigates Marcuse for not wishing to extend tolerance to his opponents, the powerful, with the argument that if Marcuse has the power to suppress his opponents, then he also logically has the power to persuade them of the correctness of his own ideas!

The argument in fact rests on Feyerabend's unexamined assumptions about the nature of his society, strange in one who so vehemently stresses the necessity to eliminate all assumptions. The chief one here is that individuals and groups actually do have a significant opportunity to enter public discussion and to change society constitutionally: "the United States is very close to a cultural laboratory in the sense of Mill where different forms of life are developed and different modes of human existence tested. There are still many cruel and irrelevant restrictions, and excesses of so-called lawfulness threatening the possibilities which this country contains. However, these restrictions, these excesses, these brutalities, occur in the brains of human beings; they are not found in the constitution. Accordingly, they can be removed by propaganda, enlightenment, special bills, personal effort (Ralph Nader) and numerous other legal means."[9] This propagandistic assertion, as opposed to analysis, is exactly the same ideology as Popper's 'Open Society' doctrine.[10] Despite the radical criticism of Popper's philosophy, Feyerabend's approach has the same naive, dogmatic picture of society as its premise as Popper's. The rigor with which Feyerabend examines theory in the physical sciences does not extend to the theory of society.

Feyerabend's liberal radicalism does not go beyond a purely theoretical commitment and his praise for revolutionaries is restricted to their intellectual boldness, not their practical actions: "The reader should remember that...despite all my praise for Marxism and its various proponents I am defending its anarchistic elements only and that I am defending those elements only in so far as they can be used for a criticism of epistemological and moral rules... However, I do not quote these authors because of their defence of a uniform society of the future, or because of their belief in inexorable laws of history...such a society, such laws...would be even less attractive than the 'system' of today..." (p. 21). Consequently, he rages against the 'extremists' of the left for their determination to use revolutionary methods which 'harden' the society against improvements (p. 111n).

It has often been remarked how Popper's boldness is restricted to his dealings with the natural sciences (calls for bold conjectures, maximum criticism, etc.) in contrast to his extreme timidity when dealing with social theory (advocacy of 'piecemeal social engineering'). Feyerabend displays a similar schizoid tendency: he preaches revolution in scientific and cultural matters, yet he counsels reform and

8. J.S. Mill, *Essay on Liberty*, pp. 197-198; cited in AM I, p. 110.

9. AM I, p. 111.

10. "Our present free world, our Atlantic Community...is the best society that ever existed." Popper, *Conjectures, op.cit.*, p. 375. In *Against Method* Feyerabend does not express such strong commitment to the 'open society' as in AM I, but the same convictions are nevertheless present, e.g., pp. 302-303, where he states his views on the relation between the state, education and society: "Ideological principles may enter the government structure but only by a majority vote and after a lengthy discussion..."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reasonableness, not to say commonsense, when considering social questions. The schizophrenia is acute, for Feyerabend's own argument about the growth of knowledge rests to a great extent on the fundamentally Marxian idea that the acceptance or rejection of theory depends on external factors. Theories are protected by and promoted by powerful interests and in this sense they are ideologies. Liberalism's familiar blind spot is manifested here: if powerful interests generate and sustain ideology, how is ideology to be eliminated without also eliminating or nullifying those interests? Marx's answer to this is clear: "Philosophers have only interpreted the world; the point is to change it." Feyerabend wants change, but exclusively through propaganda and enlightenment. Marx points out this is insufficient; the social bases of domination have to be eliminated and until then there can never be truly free discussion and criticism.

Feyerabend as a liberal thinks that repression and brutality are non-systemic to American capitalism—merely contingent events; whereas Marx shows that the physical, as opposed to the normal dimension of repression in such a society, shows itself as the ultimate deterrent in circumstances when the ruling class's ideological hegemony has weakened. Feyerabend shies away from concrete resolution of class conflict in favor of bohemian vituperation against stupidity and conformity because his real concern is for purely individual freedom in the classical liberal sense—freedom from constraint. His real concern is the threat (which is real enough) to individual freedom and creativity posed by the presence of bureaucracy and specialization. In this concern, he resembles another disillusioned liberal, Max Weber. Specifically, he is deeply worried about the effect of specialization in education. Some of his most bitter and witty criticism is aimed at educational institutions: "...those graceless safe-deposit boxes of wisdom, our universities..." He even goes so far as to advocate workers' control of educational institutions, to eliminate specialization, bureaucracy, administration and all hierarchy. But despite some acute perception of the chicanery that often passes for education, Feyerabend fails to understand that in order for these institutions to work democratically the basis of power in the wider society must be altered. Feyerabend is a worried, liberal academic caught between the crushing weight of the multiversity on the one hand, and the demands of radical students, and of his own conscience, for a genuine education on the other.

Feyerabend's views are a good example of a tendency within the liberalism of late capitalism to degenerate into irrationalism. In the past he has denied his approach is irrational on the grounds that 'taste' is not an entirely irrational criterion, for at the time good reasons can always be found for deciding between competing theories. But all the term 'rational' means in this connection is that a theory's advocates can always produce some argument for it, and he makes it clear that 'taste' and the reasons adduced are essentially matters of propaganda. If a new theory is tried and is successful in competition with other theories, what is there to be worried about? He now openly welcomes the charge of irrationalism and he declares himself to be its champion (p. 33n). There is, of course, a lot to be worried about, however, and the charge is more serious than he thinks.

The crux of the matter is that 'anything goes' is a contradictory notion. If it is to be applied consistently, then logically it is incumbent on Feyerabend to be prepared to abandon the principle of 'anything goes' itself, together with all those other tenets close to his heart, such as 'realism,' 'the happiness of the human race,' 'non-violence,' etc. (p. 21n). There is no indication whatever in his writings that he would be prepared to abandon these principles, in any circumstances. His two requirements for theoretical advance are logically incompatible: he cannot have an absolutely fluid

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

methodology, that is, one without any principles whatsoever, while simultaneously requiring of that methodology that it be consistent with his liberal principles of humanity and freedom. Obviously, these notions of humanity and freedom are his grounding principles. If he were to be consistent with the principle of 'anything goes' and abandoned his grounding principles, then one of the main arguments against an a-prioristic methodology collapses; for if he is not concerned with freedom and human progress, why all this fuss about the inhuman nature of science and its crippling of freedom?

Feyerabend has attempted an answer to this criticism, but it is a far from adequate one. What he is doing, of course, is merely substituting one set of rules ('anything goes,' 'counter-induction,' etc.) for another set he dislikes (naive falsificationism, sophisticated falsificationism, etc.—pp. 32-33n). His astonishing reply to this objection is to cite the Dadaist program, as if that provided unimpeachable authority, and to declare that, like the Dadaists, he is really adopting a subterfuge: "His [the Dadaist's] favorite pastime is to confuse rationalists by inventing compelling reasons for unreasonable doctrines..." (p. 189). "Always remember that the demonstrations and rhetorics used do not express any 'deep conviction' of mine. They merely show how easy it is to lead people by the nose in a rational way" (p. 32). So Feyerabend admits his argument is invalid and so far is unable to produce a better one to replace it. He is forced to take his own advice: if criticism cannot be dealt with, ignore it.

For someone who purports to admire propaganda as a device for disarming the opposition, what an ineffective and unconvincing answer this is! To have to admit to one's opponents that one is a mere propagandist shows an amazing lack of appreciation of social reality. In the climate of 'rationalism' and respect for the authority of science, the good propagandist cannot afford to admit he is one, for to do so is to commit professional suicide. All the rationalist enemy has to do is to accuse Feyerabendians of mere propaganda, or of playing games, then nobody listens, except for amusement. Imagine how Galileo's case would have fared in the long run if he had publically advocated propaganda, as opposed to practicing it.

Feyerabend's mistake is to think that because knowledge has been advanced by all kinds of conscious and unconscious strategems requiring great imagination and inventive power, and because its progress has failed to fit the methodological prescriptions of various positivists, that therefore science must be an irrational enterprise per se, and further that this warrants the ruthless systematization and application of any methods whatever to convince one's opponents and critics. The directive 'anything goes' does not just give increased freedom for the proliferation of imaginative theories and for genuine creativity, it is also an invitation to liars, propagandists and charlatans—and ultimately to totalitarians.

The danger of this approach becomes clear. It justifies allowing the maximum opportunity for any theory or point of view whatever, to compete for acceptance and success; and it advocates the skilled use of propaganda to support its struggle for victory. The possibilities this opens are horrific and, no doubt, are somewhat different from what Feyerabend originally intended. It would give legitimacy, for example, to the activities of the Nazi propaganda machine, which, well-oiled by contributions from business before the Nazis came to power, used the most modern propaganda techniques then known to advocate Nazi theories—including Nazi 'science.' Does Feyerabend need to be reminded of how successful they were in the competition to gain allegiance to the most successful theory? Feyerabend himself advocates letting those who want to hunt down and kill each other for pleasure do so, as long as they

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

leave others alone who do not relish the entertainment.[11] Does he imagine that Nazis and his killer hunters would stop at friendly persuasion of the unconvinced once they had sufficient support for their activities? If his reply is that he would approve only of the advocacy, as opposed to the putting into practice of such a theory, the answer to this is that by the time they try to put the theory into practice it is already too late for the potential victims. The propagation of a theory is dialectically related to its practice, it is part of it; theory and practice are not separate entities as this answer assumes. Alternatively, if his answer is that he would prohibit the propagation of Nazi theory, on the grounds that it contravened the principle of human happiness: "It seems to me that the happiness and full development of an individual human being is now as ever the highest possible," what becomes of 'anything goes?' With Feyerabend the best propaganda machine wins and there is no way in his terms of deciding between a human and an anti-human theory. Utilitarianism is not much use here because it gives no answer to the question of who is to decide what would constitute the greatest happiness. It would be unlikely that philosophers would be heeded in a war between propaganda machines. And in any case the doctrine of utilitarianism has been philosophically discredited.[12]

Feyerabend's 'epistemological anarchism' represents an extreme reaction to the god that failed, Popperian positivism. It is only because he mistakenly identifies so-called critical rationalism with reason as such that he compounds the mistake by taking any other approach as necessarily irrational. Once he discovered Popper was wrong and he abandoned Popperian standards, he was left in an abyss with no standard of rationality at all. Of course, reason does not flee the world if Popper is worng, but when someone as intelligent and sensitive as Feyerabend comes to this conclusion, it surely reveals something significant about this particular brand of liberal thought, as well as about the apostate Feyerabend.

Though he often slips into overt relativism, which treats all views as equally good or bad, he also correctly recognizes the necessity of deciding which views are correct,[13] and that decisions are made on other than methodological grounds. What is unsatisfactory is his characterization of those grounds as indefensible rationally. However, his inconsistency is that he actually retains some conception of rationality while denying it. It shows itself in the frequent allusions to science as anti-human and his concern for human freedom. He does after all hold a vague theory of human nature as perfectible, capable of progress, which is in the rationalist tradition. The trouble is he possesses no viable answer to how these ideals are to be realized in practice.

The rather brief love affair with Hegel which Feyerabend conducted in the earlier version of his position has been quietly dropped from the latest version, but his attempt to establish a connection with Marx continues.[14] While it is curious that he gives no reason for removing virtually half his former philosophical underpinning, he

11. AM I, p. 110, note 49.

12. Cf. E. Gellner, *Thought and Change* (London, 1965), and C.B. McPherson, "Post-Liberal Democracy?" *New Left Review* 33 (September-October, 1965).

13. When he agrees with "...the view reported by Carlos Castaneda which indicates that perceptions can be arranged in highly unusual ways and that the choice of a particular arrangement as corresponding to 'reality' while not arbitrary... is certainly not more 'rational' or more 'objective' than the choice of another arrangement..." Feyerabend eclectically borrows here from another irrational, romantic form of liberalism, which has appeared in sociology, namely, so-called "ethnomethodology."

14. AM I, especially pp. 27-36.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is nevertheless able to make basically the same point concerning the historical nature of knowledge, without calling on Hegel for support. In the earlier version Hegel is synthesized with Mill so that Hegel becomes a liberal reformist. The claim is that Hegel is given a 'materialist' interpretation and in support the authority of Engels, Lenin and Mao is cited. It turns out on a careful reading that these three have nothing to do with the actual use of Hegel.[15] They are invoked to make it appear that Hegel is interpreted 'materialistically.' The trick is necessary because Feyerabend in fact employs an unregenerate, idealist Hegel, untouched by Marx's critique. Marx criticizes Hegel for resolving the real conflict of social existence within capitalist society exclusively in the realm of ideas.[16] Feyerabend does exactly the same: there is a struggle between conceptual systems (or old and new theories), one negates the other, the old is transcended by the new, which 'contains' it at a higher level. What is absent here is active intervention to change society itself.

At least in Hegel's philosophy of history, there is an end to this carousel, for history culminates in his idealist conception of mind becoming one with itself. But with Feyerabend the process continues to infinity, an endless renewal of our obsolescent categories in order to escape the abyss. It is no accident that Marx is actually used only twice by Feyerabend: when he characterizes science as alienated from man in a very general way, and very briefly when he refers to the concept of uneven development.[17] He could not afford to employ Marx's historical materialist critique of Hegel because it is so noticeably incompatible with his commitment to liberalism. So when Feyerabend brings Marxists like Lenin, Trotsky, Luxemburg and Mao in on his side, he mistakenly groups them with himself as mere opportunists in method, conveniently forgetting that unlike himself they do not divorce ideas from action.

It could be argued that Feyerabend's attack on positivism performs the same kind of function as Marx's attack on the philosophy of his own day, but this is so only in a limited sense. Marx's attack was in order to clear away the ideological debris as a prelude to producing a critical theory of society and as part of a movement to change it; whereas Feyerabend wants to pile up the debris instead, by encouraging the proliferation of theories, and with no commitment to practice.

There is some affinity between Feyerabend, the idealist, and the Althusserian idealist interpretation of Marx. Althusser takes up Bachelard's notion of theoretical advance in science as an 'epistemological break,' whereby new concepts are produced, new problems defined, new terrain occupied. This conception seems similar to the notion of "incommensurability."[18] The two are also extremely hostile to empiricism. The essential feature they share is a purely abstract concern with science: in neither is it possible to find an account of how science concretely relates to society. But their differences are more significant. Feyerabend rejects science as a distinct, superior form of knowledge, whereas for Althusser and his followers science is the be and end all.[19]

---

15. Lenin and Mao are simply cited as authorities with alleged insights into the dialectic and for their alleged agreement with Hegel, Engels as providing evidence of the applicability of the dialectic to nature, history and thought. For Mao, *ibid.*, p. 101, note 27, p. 115, note 89; for Lenin, p. 104, note 35, p. 114, notes 68, 71, p. 105, note 78, p. 116, note 101; for Engels, p. 34.

16. Marx, "Toward the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law: Introduction," in L.D. Easton and K.H. Guddat, eds., *Writings of the Young Marx* (New York, 1967), pp. 249-264.

17. AM I, p. 95, note 10; "Consolations," p. 228; for discussion of the concept of "uneven development," cf. *Against Method*, p. 146, note 2.

18. L. Althusser, *Reading Capital* (London, 1971), where parallels are drawn between Marx's theory and Lavoisier's advances in chemistry as complete breaks with former theory.

19. N. Geras, "Louis Althusser—An Assessment," *New Left Review* 71 (January-February, 1972). A recent assessment of Feyerabend by one of Althusser's disciples exemplifies their

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Though Feyerabend adopted a Hegelian, idealist position in order to attack Popper at one time, when it is convenient he is also a mechanical materialist. That he uses both idealism and materialism whenever it suits him, may be inconsistent to us, but then Feyerabend's aim is to make a virtue of inconsistency, and inconsistency has never worried the propagandist. He commits himself also to a materialist ontology by aiming to produce a theory of human affairs couched entirely in 'materialist concepts.'[20] Since he is a 'realist,' in philosophical terms, this is not merely an exercise in linguistic philosophy. He believes that men's social and cultural evolution, including the current state of knowledge about society and nature, is biologically determined: "The interplay between proliferation and tenacity also amounts to the continuation, on a new level, of the biological development of the species and it may even increase the tendency for useful biological mutations."[21]

What precisely is the relevence of this neo-Darwinian behaviorism? If the lesson is that humans are complex evolving, biological organisms, that is not news, it is a commonplace. How does it help to understand and to control the immensely complex structure of social relations and culture (including science) which should fulfill men's needs? This is the task of a genuinely critical theory. Feyerabend is not entirely unaware of the qualitative difference between men and the rest of nature—consciousness—that is, men's capacity to analyse and to plan, and consequently the capacity to shape and change the world in accordance with their purposes, an ability to transform themselves at the same time as nature and society are transformed by their actions. The weakness of Feyerabend's type of crude materialism is that it renders this understanding and action pointless. What is the point of inventing alternative conceptions if these are in turn determined by a material world ultimately beyond our control? How would it ever be possible to escape these material constraints except in a completely aimless way?

Feyerabend's oscillation between idealism and materialism shows he has no conception of the dialectic. If he had, he could have avoided, as Marx does, the false antinomy of these two poles of thought and the contradictions inherent in each of them.

The belief in science as a progressive force which formed an important part of the structure of liberal thought in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, has weakened in the twentieth century. In the person of Feyerabend this tendency has now manifested itself in the philosophy of science itself. The manner in which he rejects positivist scientism identifies him with the nihilist, more irrationalist side of current bourgeois thought. Paradoxically, the wrong direction his break with positivism takes is determined by the very terrain he has inhabited and traversed. By restricting inquiry into the nature of science to an abstract exercise in epistemology supplemented by internalist historical case studies of scientific innovation, like the 'critical rationalists' he suppresses inquiry into the real social practice of science in society.

In contrast a historical materialist theory recognizes the essentially practical character of science as a form of labor, in the sense that scientific knowledge is a moment in the creation of a progressively more complex and powerful mode of

propensity to reify science: R. Bhaskar, "Feyerabend versus Bachelard," *New Left Review* 94 (1975). The author perfunctorily dismisses the Frankfurt School's critique of science as irrationalist *Lebensphilosophie*, no different from Feyerabend, thus reflecting Althusserians' chronic myopia when faced with theories which stress science is a *social*, as opposed to a "theoretical," practice.

20. Feyerabend, "Reply to Criticism," in R. Cohen and M. Wartofsky, eds., *Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, Vol. 2 (1965).

21. "Consolations," p. 210.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

production, which is the objectified expression of men's historical project to make their world, transform their mode of existence and themselves. Science is first and foremost a socially organized activity embodying historically contingent purposes, which is both detemined by and itself simultaneously helps to sustain and reproduce those social relations.

Under capitalism science serves to reproduce and extend capital and its relations in two ways. Firstly, science's 'self-reflection,' which is pre-eminently positivist, is a distortion providing particularly effective ideological support. Whether in its sophisticated form consumed by the wider public, which glorifies expert opinion, its mystificatory power and its opacity is formidable. Positivist ideology equates analytical, empirical thought and knowledge with reason per se. It refuses to acknowledge that science and technology are socially mediated, and therefore it always presents the existing social arrangements as technically inevitable. In this manner it sanctions and eulogizes them while reifying them. When this form of thought is universally transposed to all social situations with the aim of 'explaining' them, it underwrites the permeation of the social domination of capital.

Ironically, Popper, the erstwhile defender of individual freedom, developed a doctrine ('piecemeal social engineering') which forbade social scientists on formal logical grounds from relating the 'facts' or aspects of societies they study, to the whole of which they are part. He inadvertently provided an almost perfect justification for the most thoroughgoing totalitarianism, for once a social system has established itself as the 'normality,' in Popper's view there is no scientific method of testing the nature of the social whole and therefore no scientific way it could be changed *in toto* once it is established. The young Lukács brilliantly sketched the ideological propensity of the bourgeoisie to fragment social reality in such a manner, and its chronic inability to understand social reality as anything but an inert, frozen entity.

Secondly, compared with the competitive phase of capitalism, science now contributes on a qualitatively different scale to reproducing capital and the very conditions of life of the bourgeoisie, that is the class relations of production characteristic of capitalism. To maintain capital accumulation, productivity and profitability levels, the forces of production have undergone progressive mechanization. In order to ensure the continuance of this development capital relies now on science as the major force of production. Its survival depends on its ability to subordinate science to its purposes and it does this to a great extent via the state.

Feyerabend and those like him understand little of this and they understand even less the contradictory nature of the development of science. Science also represents progress in the concrete sense that it extends men's potential control over their own destiny. What prevents its realization is the specific social organization which dictates the way science functions. When Feyerabend complains, correctly, that science is imposed on us and the third world by force he neglects that the imposition is not brought about by the force of scientific ideas themselves, but by the power of capitalism. It is necessary to condemn, as he does, the way science has been used to eliminate whole cultures, for the narrow authoritarian form it takes in the advanced societies; but is also necessary to recognize its emancipatory potential. The fact that it by no means at the moment realizes that potential does not justify jettisoning belief in the need to realize it. It is not the fault of scientists and philosophers of science alone that science is the practice and the ideology of domination, though of course they share some of the blame. They are not, and never will be a new ruling class, with entire responsibility for the direction of science. It is useless vituperating against them as if they were. Nor is it realistic to present science as some kind of pervasive mistake, which

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

can be corrected with attacks on scientists and philosophers of science. Conversion to a new view of science by itself is not enough. It is not accidental that science is one of the main institutional and ideological props of modern capitalism. If modern scientific practice is to be changed ways will have to be found of transforming its social context as well. That involves transcending science's limitations and retaining its achievements. It is sheer lunacy and romanticism to suggest we could live without it and that without it the world would be a better one.

Feyerabend's intellectual trajectory has led him to pose the problem of the status of scientific knowledge, of its value, truth and social purpose, solely as if it were a predicament of the individual's mind instead of a social question. This asocial problematic replicates in a sense the actual social situation of the bourgeois intellectual and his typical ideological response to it. The forces of modern capitalism and its endemic social conflict threaten his autonomy and rend to reduce him to a mere appendage of the system. His specific social experience and his intellectual universe are permeated with the ideology and the practice of competitive individualism, which socially and intellectually atomizes him. He is induced to interpret his involvement in class conflict purely as an individual problem requiring nothing more than an abstract intellectual solution. Threatening social situations are transposed thus into problems of knowledge and crises of meaning. Consequently, there is a predisposition to look for solutions purely in the reform of and the more efficient management of the apparatus of knowledge, that is, to stress the centrality of concepts, logic and language. With Popperians and logical empiricists the stress is typically on logic and methodological prodedure, but quite apart from this, it seems to be no accident that the major reaction in bourgeois philosophy to the intermittent crisis of late capitalism has manifested itself in a deept anxiety about clarity of meaning, and in a wholly abstract concern with the basis of knowledge.

Feyerabend seeks to replace efforts of this kind with another kind of reform—a reorientation of laymen's and practitioners attitudes to science via education. But the premise of his reform is mistaken: knowledge is not an entity poised above and separate from society.

John Hargreaves

Sharon Zukin. *Beyond Marx and Tito: Theory and Practice in Yugoslav Socialism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1975.

Few of the many dozens of articles and books in English and French published during the last years on the "Yugoslav road to socialism" have been concerned with aspects of Yugoslav life other than the structures of self-management and their relations to the market socialism that Tito and a bevy of agile economists have devoted themselves to developing in place of the "Plan"—the "rigid statist-bureaucratic system" as Yugoslavs call it—to which the Soviets are wedded. As a result, the wealth of information now available to western readers focuses almost exclusively on "objective" events in post-war Yugoslavia: the break with the Soviets; industrialization; the forging of self-management as a mobilizing ideology to replace (or maybe sustain and expand) that of the partisan period; its evolution into structures resembling a modified western development model—market socialism; the emergence of new forms of social differentiation in the guise of technocrats and bureaucrats; and finally, the consequences of all of these for the economic health of a country firmly enmeshed in the vicissitudes of an increasingly shaky international monetary system.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The empirical approaches behind these studies have left all too little room for an alternative understanding of the meaning of progress, or more broadly, change in the context of Yugoslav society. With a near singularity of purpose, most studies have avoided probing either the long term theoretical implications of the structural manipulations for the Yugoslav model of socialism, or the subjective dimensions of social change on the two generations who now populate this complicated federal state. Happily both omissions have begun to be filled admirably by a coterie of dissident Yugoslavs whose works are increasingly available in English. In addition, an important western contribution toward developing a viable methodology with which to study the personal dimensions of social change is now available with the publication of Zukin's book. Because the developmental history of post-war Yugoslav socialism, including detailed descriptions of the self-management organs in industries and communes, is widely available elsewhere (although Zukin also provides a chapter on this matter), I shall concentrate here on what I feel are more novel—if controversial—features of this book: first, Zukin's attempt, however incomplete, to develop an alternative to the mainstream social science approach to problems of political socialization and social change, and second, the kinds of information she provides about the daily thoughts and responses of ten Belgrade families to Yugoslav society, and the conclusions she draws from this data. These two aspects of the book are particularly important to socialist intellectuals interested in finding tools appropriate to developing a meaningful critique of everyday life under both capitalism and socialism. And they are also possible building blocks for those seeking a socialist theory capable of moving us significantly beyond the practice of one of the comparatively more sympathetic forms of socialism yet to appear.

In the first and last chapters and in the appendix on "Methodology and Field Work," Zukin acknowledges the influence on her work of such mentors as Alfred Schutz, Peter Berger, Thomas Luckmann, Robert E. Lane, G.H. Mead, Erving Goffman and Oscar Lewis, and the older explicitly Marxist tradition identified in the twentieth century with the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School and sometimes linked to Mannheim. The former group has made significant contributions toward redressing the mainstream neglect and-or exploitation of research subjects. By using subjective material—impressions, opinions, perspectives, thoughts, memories, feelings—presented by their subjects about the world around them and about each other, in their own way these researchers sought to counter the impact of behaviorism and empiricism as an explicit social science methodology. They also show how an attitudinal variable, filtered through consciousness, can thereby contribute to how social institutions actually work. Zukin borrows their techniques—participant observation and analysis of respondent's life stories—and combines with them a Marxist concern for the gap between theory and practice to begin to construct a methodology to study social change that can loosely be called an "anthropological political sociology." With this "man centered" (in the tradition of the anthropological naturalism of the early Marx) window on social reality, she can then explore the thorny problem of political consciousness and socialization as it emerges both through the myriad interactions that comprise the daily lives of her sample of the Belgrade families and through an examination of their—and general Yugoslav—cultural history.

An advantage of this approach is that it is, in the best Marxian sense, dialectical, for it allows the researcher to view social contradictions—for example, those between official rhetoric and daily life or those between individuals asnd various collectives—as part and parcel of a dynamic historical movement rather than representations of outright failure or national paralysis. The dynamism of the method, Zukin argues,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

arises from four sets of changing relationships: 1) those between the choice of social goals-policies and the responses to them, including unanticipated ones; 2) those between individuals and collectives which are structured by institutions and ideology; 3) those between tradition and modernity, particularly in regard to one's "place" in a social order; and 4) those between morality and its practice. Of them, I find the last particularly troublesome; it requires a well-versed dialectician of a particular persuasion not to get caught on the horns of that old dilemma of Leninized Marxism—the mirror theory of reality. In Yugoslavia, where a lot of socialist morality can be captured within either centralist or consumerist models, the problem of the relationship between practice and morality is volatile and very real. It is resolved quite differently depending on whether you manage an enterprise, or are a philosopher of praxis; and it is abundantly clear that the average worker has little choice of solution.

Another perhaps more serious problem with Zukin's complex scheme is that it combines a reliance on microscopic data—however dense it may be—with an almost Jungian affection for the social memory and social consciousness of respondents and their cultural history as explanatory hypotheses for present problems. These kinds of assumptions require both a sophisticated writer and reader in order that the subject-object interactions on which Zukin wants to base her study will remain the warp and woof of history, and in order that notions about collective consciousness in the guise of anthropology will not be substituted for social class analysis as the working material of social theory. While she does recognize the problem, unhappily Zukin does not walk this tightrope quite skillfully enought to avoid sociologizing the Marxian concept of alienation, and she also avoids coming to grips with the meaning of class in Yugoslavia. This order of problem seems to me more important than those commonly thought to adhere to the anthropologist's kitbag because of his or her participant methodology: cultural blinders, psychologizing, researcher bias and the limitations inherent to any sample. Zukin dismisses the later issue perhaps a little too easily by her explicit rejection of "the fetishism of 'the scientific method' and its alleged objectivity in favor of explanation 'grounded' in admittedly subjective interpretation." However, her direct avowal of a "bias toward participatory democracy and economic equality," which in Yugoslav terms, brands her a "utopian:" one who prefers a system with strong state controls over the economy and weak ones over the political life of its citizens is, from another point of view, an essential ingredient of good socialist scholarship.

Zukin places all these choices against a framework of three working concepts: 1) the stratification of political participation; 2) public behavior; and 3) the political generation, all of which are worth our serious consideration. It is no surprise to any student of contemporary socialism—East, West, or Third World—that the political participation is often arranged along intersecting horizontal and vertical axes that are seemingly reproduced by the movement itself. Neither is it remarkable that movements which have become established or institutionalized are characterized by a broad spectrum of leaders and followers—even the most egalitarian of new left movements gave birth to their "heavies," a kind of compressed generational stratification, and sexual divisions of labor. In Yugoslavia the stratification and generational phenomena are less remarkable in themselves as characteristics of a society with an incomplete social revolution, than their details are significant as indicators of whether the revolution will continue. Zukin catalogs the political stratification of Yugoslav citizens into "establishment activists;" office workers and party members who adhere to an official line; "issue activists:" those who constitute "interest groups" at the local level; "citizen-partisans:" who in combining personal problems with

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

broader social issues in some sense represent a "socialist backlash" to the old days; and "unmobilized masses:" those at all educational and economic levels who are bored or uninterested by politics. The typology is again less interesting than how the specific political interactions resulting from it inhibit continued political mobilization along socialist lines.

On the basis of her participant observation and interviews, Zukin demonstrates that the stratification at the local political meetings—exemplified by marked differences in seating patterns, attire, age, and the dominance of form over content in argument, results in the absence of vertical communication and thereby contributes a structurally based socio-political differentiation to the more commonly assumed economic and national-ethnic disparities which influence coherent political mobilization. At the enterprise level, disparities emerge in the workers' councils between the highly skilled and white collar workers with the "professional interest in self-management" in order to "straighten things out," and the unskilled workers whose claims of interest in the enterprise are shoved aside. From Zukin's evidence it would seem that the very *structure* and consequent stratification of Yugoslav organizational forms, in addition to obviously skewing decision-making upwards, more grievously tend to abort politicization of the people as a whole. The truly politicized citizens are the dissenters: professors, writers, students, "utopians," social democrats, hoodlums and juvenile delinquents, or members of the old partisan generation who can still fan the flames of memory for their activism. This is indeed a bleak picture of most of a population, old and young, for whom social mobility—either acquired or aspired to—forms the backbone of politics. For these people—the achievers of the partisan generation and their children, and the skilled or white collar urban working class—the "struggles for the dinar" and the "status of high consumption" are what legitimate politics is about. The intergenerational learning between parents and children, contrary to expectations about a fruitful mix of partisan ideology and self-management values, has had a largely negative effect.

The exact extent to which the very structures of the self-managed society have contributed to the emergence and perpetuation of this particular set of political values by institutionalizing the revolution and the all too obvious disparities in distribution is obviously arguable but not negligible. Both the often empty formalism of political problem solving and the myriad illegal ways in which Yugoslavs go about resolving everyday life dilemmas, suggest that a major weakness of the structures lies in their doubled edged message: 1) socialism is here; and 2) a developed socialist consciousness is possible only in a highly industrialized society, ergo defer gratification and blink at the disparities. The prevalence of illegal housing construction in "wild settlement" on the outskirts of urban areas, and the widespread "stealing from society" as a way "to enjoy social rewards like money, houses, cars and prestige" are two especially telling examples of the ways in which Yugoslavs accommodate to living under their social system while protesting it. The regime tolerates these corruptions of its ideals becuuse they are ways of buying off mass discontent. It thereby gambles that the party and government can deliver enough, or control enough, to counteract opposition from the smaller specialized marginal groups.

Interestingly, Zukin's interviews reveal that the awareness of this strategy is increasing both among the disillusioned partisan generation whose zeal and ideals continue to be badly tarnished by "their limited social role as citizens and workers," and among their children, whose consumerism is matched by their political cynicism—except where a political life is deliberately chosen as a road to upward social mobility. But undeniably, the shift from socialism as the means and ends of both

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

methods and ideology in the course of industrial development to socialism as futility—electrification (to paraphrase Lenin) plus deferred gratification—has taken a heavy toll on the Yugoslav soul. The original identification of self-management with de-hierarchization and dealienation has clearly changed, at a bare minimum, to an identification of self-management with economic development. This is not to say that all Yugoslav opinion about authority and equality relations falls neatly only along a bipolar continuum, but rather to suggest that truly plural views about these issues are, much like in Western industrialized countries, a matter of wishful thinking or the purview of marginal groups—whose commitment cannot make up for the decline of revolutionary activism in the society at large. In the current Yugoslav context, exemplified by fresh outbreaks of political repression, it is not possible to be both egalitarian and pluralist in the best sense. Neither is it possible to speculate whether Yugoslav self-awareness of these matters could potentially translate into a renewal of revolutionary consciousness.

If the concepts of stratification and the political generation then, are useful if unexceptional analytic and predictive tools, Zukin's use of the still controversial concept of public behavior is far more innovative. Zukin posits that "just as the ideology of self-management postulates an ideal of universal political participation, so its orientation toward socialist humanism presupposes a certain norm of social interaction." The norm is at once both collective and objective, involving interdependence, mutual respect and responsibility, and equality. Relying on the work of Goffman and Stojanovic, Zukin argues that the self-governing individual of a "democratic-socialist character" must have internalized Marxian socialist ethics in such a way that "the 'critical others' who initiate, monitor and judge behavior are individuals themselves. . . [who become] a cybernetic mini-system constantly adjusting their actions so that they not only accord with but also reflect the mores of the whole society." To evaluate the extent to which this norm permeates the Yugoslav character (and assuming that its absence may help explain current patterns of political participation), Zukin turns from participant observation in the explicitly political arena to participant observation of the public behavior of Yugoslav Serbs, a reading of Yugoslav literature on the subject, and to speculations about the residual impact of culture and history on these matters. In every case she concludes that Yugoslavs are more influenced by their traditional norms than by the ideals of socialist humanism. Thus, in public places and in their interpersonal behavior, Yugoslavs first respond to their own needs for self-expression with little self-awareness of the "public presentation of self" known to westerners, a behavior trait which she traces to traditional South Slavic values wherein the important others are one's relations in the home rather than strangers or universal social norms outside it. Zukin contrasts the expectation of order given and demanded in the home, even with its attendant sets of obligations, with the chaos tolerated if not evoked in public places, to argue that "the lack of critical others outside the home may impede the development of the kind of public self—responsible, considerate—that socialist self-management requires." She finds that the reluctance to assume the responsibility of being a critical other is grounded in motivations of self-interest which in turn contribute to Yugoslavs' widespread acceptance of corruption in their society even while they simultaneously define it as a "social problem" and are therefore inimicable to the growth of socialist consciousness. The same kind of explanation underlies a general reluctance to fully believe in or use public institutions. Similar patterns are seen in the relationships between the different ethnic groups, in the persistence of a bureaucratic mentality that veers between the extremes of impersonality and personalism in official-client relationships clearly incompatible

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with self-management roles, and a stubborn resistance to innovation that undercuts the "scientific and experimental attitudes" of socialist humanism.

The partisan generation appealed to Yugoslavs, especially to Serbs, in the language of their myths, identifying the partisan with the composite figure of the heroic Serbian *borac*, the fighter, and his alter-ego, the *hajduk* or highwayman, a kind of Robin Hood. The post-war leadership tried to transfer this salient peasant model to the self-manager. It proved difficult to assimilate the white collar *borac* as the guerrila figure of industrialization to the ideals of self-managed socialism; however, thanks to the meteoric rise of inexperienced partisans the model of the *hajduk* translated more easily into a norm of "stealing from society." In personal terms, then, these models reflect the continuing conflict in Yugoslavia between the individualistic norm of industrialism and the collective ones of socialism. Similarly the self-stereotypes of Yugoslavs, which combine traditions of authoritarianism, egalitarianism, and self-sacrifice in the context of peasant "lack of adjustment to production work, particularly the production of surplus for either deferred consumption or sale and the preference for forced acquisition, especially through plunder, over market transactions," do not bode well for "social self-management in a multi-national state." Furthermore, ethnic differences developed in response to the long period of Ottoman rule—specifically between the Serbians who more or less succumbed to oriental despotism, and the Montenegrins who developed a closed community with a warrior spirit. Today the Serbian's "leisurely execution of work tasks and obligations has become a positive value in itself," as has his acting out of the polar norms of *moba*, mutual help, for other oppressed peoples which carries an expectation that he will need the favor to be returned some day, and the norm of *inat*, or an action out of spite—both of which can be turned for or against the current society.

In sum, then, Zukin argues that the juxtaposition of traditional and modern norms has generally left the former dominant—particularly as they are interpreted in the areas of decision-making and distribution. The result has been a "hunger for values" reflected, not surprisingly, in such social symptoms as a rising crime rate, declining authority of the family head, and narrowly conceived spheres of obligation to others. The official ideology touts the virtues of self-management, but the self-manager himself is perceived as an "economic personage:" self-interested, a conformist, opportunist, a rationalizer. The ideology and practice of this self-managed society, then, seems to have sociologized the very concept of alienation and bred responses to it in ways not unlike in the West. In one way or another Zukin's respondents illustrate that meaningful labor is not part of their daily personal experience. Self-management has made life "better" because it is a synonym for the social goal of economic development, not because it means the end of self-estrangement, or the "middling sorrow" which characterized the average peasant life.

Although Zukin's tone of sympathetic disillusionment may annoy many readers and her methodology may dismay others, *Beyond Marx and Tito* deserves a careful reading on grounds of both method and content. If it is true that the ideology and institutions of Yugoslav self-management render humans as superfluous as their counterparts under monopoly capitalism, then we must think even more carefully about the special kinds of corruption and decline that are generated by socialist islands in a capitalist sea. The philosophers of *Praxis* have argued that one cost of Yugoslav economic survival ha been an increasing intellectual and moral narrowness. Zukin's evidence suggests that the very impetus behind the Yugoslav road to socialism had induced a tragic and perhaps fatal indifference to two fundamental pillars of socialism: political participation and dealienated labor.

Keitha Saspin Fine

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONTINUUM BOOKS

In his brilliant new work, THE DIALECTIC OF IDEOLOGY AND TECHNOLOGY, Gouldner relates both ideology and sociology to the revolution in printing technology and the emergence of bourgeois society. Pointing to the importance of ideology for the bourgeois class system, he emphasizes its "renaissance" in today's consumerism and the resulting crisis for capitalism.

Grounded in both classical American sociology and neo-Marxist critical theory, Professor Gouldner's work combines a remarkable empirical sweep with a lucid analysis of connections between these theoretical traditions. Throughout, he moves toward the formulation of a modern politics centered on new techniques of communication.
A Continuum Book
$12.95

Alvin W. Gouldner

THE DIALECTIC OF IDEOLOGY AND TECHNOLOGY

The Origins, Grammar, and Future of Ideology

THE SEABURY PRESS
815 Second Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10017

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SHORT JOURNAL REVIEWS:*

ALTERNATIVE, No. 105 (December, 1975)

1 Berlin 15, Postfach 150230. Published bi-monthly. Foreign subscriptions DM 25; single issue DM 4.50. BRECHT and KORSCH, *"Aus dem unveröffentlichen Briefwechsel im Exil (1934-1947)."* Interesting footnote material, relevant mostly for biographical purposes. HILDEGARD BRENNER, HERMANN HAARMANN, *"Brecht-Korsch Diskussion: Positionen der Literaturwissenschaft."* Critical summary of works on the Brecht-Korsch relationship, with emphasis on the difference in interpretations in East and West Germany concerning Korsch's influence on Brecht (the "Korsch legend").

ALTERNATIVE, No. 106 (February, 1976)

GERHARD PLUMPE, *"Aesthetik oder Theorie literarischer Praxis?"* The structuralist approach to aesthetics is opposed to that of reflection theory (or philosophical aesthetics). Historically, aesthetics is concerned with "appearances;" hence the problem of dualism (appearance-essence) or determinism (especially since Hegel). Of course, any approach to *philosophical* aesthetics is an ideological formation, e.g., the claim to universality. A *non-philosophical* theory of artistic *praxis* must consider regionality, materiality, and specificity as constitutive elements. HELENA ANDERS, NIKOLAUS REHLING, *"Zum Beispiel: 'Mutter Courage'."* In order to illustrate contrasting approaches, a revised Lukácsian position (Kaufmann) and Althusser's reviews are presented. The authors then suggest an alternative to the above analyses of Brecht's play. WOLFGANG EGGERSDORFER, WERNER EISNER, *"Aesthetik, Erfahrung und Alltäglichkeit."* This detailed review of *Das Unvermögen der Realität* (P. Brückner *et al.*)—which attempts to transcend previous theories and to suggest the principles of a Marxist aesthetics—concludes that a lot of work remains to be done. BARUCH SPINOZA, *"Ueber die Verfahrungsweise wissenschaftlicher Erkennens."* Since both Marx and Althusser rely on Spinoza in their discussion of epistemology, the relevant section is reprinted here. ARNIM REGENBOGEN, *"Ueber Abbildtheorie—auch über deren trauriges Abbild in der Diskussion hierzulande."* Various articles on reflection theory, especially as published in *Argument*, are summarized and found wanting. THE EDITORS, *"10 Thesen zur materialistischen Literaturanalyse."* This tentative approach focuses on the function of literature in bourgeois society. ALFRED SOHN-RETHEL, *"Materialistische Erkenntnistheorie?"* The very issue of a materialist epistemology is absurd, since it is a reification and inconsistent with dialectical materialism.

DAS ARGUMENT, No. 92 (October, 1975)

75 Karlsruhe 21, Postfach 210730. This is the fifth and final issue on the topic of reflection theory. It also includes editorials on the "Berufsverbot," i.e., the legalized exclusion of "radicals" from West German civil service. HANS JOERG SANDKUEHLER, *"Streitbarer Materialismus oder Streit um den Materialismus?"* Simple-minded reflection theory is no longer at issue, the debate has become more complex and sophisticated. The article is mostly a critique of W. F. Haug's "orthodoxy" (*Argument* 81), i.e., an anti-philosophical orientation, which endangers the unity of science and *Weltanschauung* by reducing it to "materialist monism." The complexities of the subject-object relationship cannot be simplified either on the grounds of deterministic, nor subjective historicist principles. The crucial question always concerns the socio-historical conditions under which knowledge originates. RAINER ROTERMUNDT, *"Materialistische Erkenntnistheorie—was soll das?"* Another critique of Haug, this time as "too bourgeois" and "ahistorical:" the question of the relation between knowledge and existence is a reification of Marx's concept of "social existence." Nature and the natural sciences are not the basis of materialism, but dialectical materialism must be a critique of the natural sciences. ROLF ZIMMERMANN, *"Der Begriff der Praxis bei Marx und die Elimination der Abbildtheorie."* The relationship between theory (epistemology) and praxis is unclear, but an analysis of Marx is fruitful to distinguish between several meanings of praxis, with its interpretation as sensuous-human activity as crucial. Thus, reflection theory is superfluous and can be abandoned, since it is no more than a reification of the frequently misunderstood metaphor of base and superstructure. WOLFGANG FRITZ HAUG, *"Wider den bloss verbalen Materialismus."* A summary of the contradictions, where Haug replies to his critics and, of course, reasserts his original position.

---

*This journal review section has been prepared by the Toronto *Telos* Group, 240 Vanier College, York University, 4700 Keele Street, Downsview, Ontario M3J 1PE, Canada. All inquiries, suggestions, and complaints concerning this section should be forwarded to this address.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DAS ARGUMENT, No. 93 (November, 1975)

Editorials on the environment and the relation between society and nature. DIETER HASSENPFLUG, *"Umwelt zu Marktpreisen?"* This article, whose later parts will be published in future issues, criticizes the Stockholm Conference in 1974 for not demonstrating the class character of approaches to and policies of environmental protection. ULRICH HAMPICKE, *"Kapitalistische Expansion und Umweltzerstörung."* An analysis which attempts to demonstrate that environmental limits to growth do not automatically bring about the breakdown of capitalism. HANS IMMLER, *"Die Notwendigkeit von Stoff- und Energiebilanzen im Betrieb."* Accounting for energy use on the factory level is desirable for planning as well as environmental protection. *Special section on "Sexualität und Herrschaft."* SIEGLINDE TOEMMEL. *"'Männlicher' Kapitalismus und 'weiblicher' Sozialismus."* Marcuse's essay "Marxism and Feminism" is criticized. In addition to all the problems inherent in Marcuse's work in general, his article is too simplistic, e.g., the equation of patriarchy with capitalism, categorization of male and female "qualities" (where "feminism" becomes a class based luxury item), etc. RUDI CAMERER, *"Alice Schwarzers sexuelle Utopie und die Entpolitisierung der Frauenbewegung."* A review article criticizing Schwarzer for overemphasizing sexuality and disregarding class membership in her explanation of women's roles. JACOB HEMPEL, *"Feminismus und Psychotherapie bei Phyllis Chesler."* Chesler's approach is seen as petit-bourgeois, since it advocates equality between the sexes only. A radicalization of psychoanalysis is necessary, but cannot be accomplished in isolation from the socio-historical setting. THORSTEN GRAF, MANFRED HERZER, *"Zur neueren Diskussion über Homosexualität."* The authors describe and analyze the frequently encountered prejudice of socialist parties and unions against homosexuality in the context of recent literature on the topic.

DAS ARGUMENT, No. 94 (December, 1975)

Special issue on Althusser. H.-J. RHEINBERGER, *"Die erkenntnistheoretischen Auffassungen Althussers."* A critical treatment of Althusser's categories with a specific emphasis on the relationship between the notions of praxis and epistemology. URS JAEGGI, *"Theorie der Geschichte: Geschichte der Theorie."* An ambivalent critique of Althusser's structuralist conception of history. Jaeggi views Althusser's work as suffering from a 'theoretistic' deviation which is not capable of providing an account of concrete socio-political processes. CHRISTA THOMA-HERTERICH, *"Althussers 'Selbstkritik'."* A discussion of Althusser's "Elements d'autocritique." The author brings attention to the influence that Spinoza, Bachelard, and Lacan have had on Althusser.

AUT AUT, No. 148 (July-August, 1975)

via Curti 8, 20136 Milan, Italy. $3 per issue. Special issue on "The Socialist World." KURT MARKO, *"L'Ideologia Sovietica Oggi."* An attempt to locate the main developments of Russian ideological conflicts in the past two decades. Focusing on the confrontation between "reformists" and "realists," Marko argues that ideological competition within various strata of the intelligentsia are likely to intensify in the future. GUIDO NERI, *"Nota su Marko."* A mild critique of Marko's evaluation of Russian leadership and the nature of internal opposition. GABRIELLA FUSI, *"L'Opposizione Filosofica e Politica in Jugoslavia: la Rivista 'Praxis'."* A detailed history of Yugoslav Marxism from 1945 to the recent internal purges. This history shows that the myth of self-management has mystified the repressive reality which is likely to intensify in the near future. GUIDO NERI, *"Sul Significato del 1968-69 in Cecoslovacchia."* A review-essay of recent works concerning the Prague Spring and its aftermath, with particular emphasis on Kusin's work. GIACOMO MARRAMAO, *"Il Marxismo di Gramsci e la Theoria della Transitione."* An unwarrantedly positive evaluation of Badaloni's new book on Gramsci and Italian Marxism. GIOVANBATTISTA ZORZOLI, *'I Limiti dello Sviluppo: Ideologia e Scienze."* A generally misinformed critique of the "Club of Rome." ALESSANDRO CASICCIA, *"Svolta Tecnologica, Lavoro Produttivo, Populazione."* A critique of Zorzoli's article. FRANCO FORTINI, *"Gli Ultimi Cainati ossia Melmoth Reconciliato."* An incoherent discussion of everything under the sun. LEONARDO CEPPA, *"Per una Theoria Psicanalitica delle Relazione Oggettuali."* An excellent discussion of psychoanalytic theories of child-development. FRANCO RELLA, *"Il Divano di Santa Teresa."* A review of recent literature on Lacan.

CHINA QUARTERLY, No. 64 (December, 1975)

Research Publications Ltd., Victoria Hall, E. Greenwich, London SE10 ORF. $15 per year. HUNG-MAO TIEN, *"Taiwan in Transition: Prospects for socio-political Change."* Economic development appears to have taken place in Taiwan, yet the concomitant 'politial demo-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cratization' has not followed, thereby tending to foster the various overseas independence movements. The Kuomintang leaders are promoting the development of a socio-economic system antithetical to that of the mainland, even though Taiwan's future is very much dependent on the support of a U.S. which is increasingly amenable to the People's Republic. HONG YUNGLEE, *"The Radical Students in Kwangtung during the Cultural Revolution."* Rejecting the model of "totalitarianism" which sees the Cultural Revolution as a mere power struggle within the elite, Hong views the central issue of the Cultural Revolution "as the clear-cut division between the elite and the masses" and, as such, another moment in the continuing Chinese revolution. Radicals are defined in terms of their ideological underpinnings and political positions, and are then juxtaposed to the conservatives. The former attacked the party organization for taking the capitalist road, while the latter attacked individual leaders and the "monsters and freaks"—the intellectuals and the old bourgeois class. Given the defeat of the radicals, this article sheds light on the struggle and outcome of the Cultural Revolution. MARTIN KING WHYTE, *"Inequality and Stratification in China."* Inequalities still exist in both rural and urban China. But a number of rigorous policies and programs have been implemented which attempt to mitigate the "subjective consequences" of these inequalities. Although "checks" and "hurdles" operate to prevent a new elite, China is still described as a "stratified" society. KANG CHAO, *"The Production and Application of Chemical Fertilizers in China."* In the last decade, chemical fertilizer output in China has increased by 330% and will continue to increase owing to 26 factories built by French, Japanese and U.S. companies. This could impede the establishment of self-reliance in China. However, foreign debts could be resolved or at least offset by exporting fertilizers and using the proceeds to import grain as well as to finance the recently acquired factories. ROXANE WITKE, *"Wu Kuei-Hsien: Labor Heroine to Vice-Premier."* C.K. JEN, *"Science and the Open-Doors Educational Movement."* This movement, an integral part of the Cultural Revolution, has greatly enhanced and influenced China's society and technology. Education, according to Mao, must emphasize that science and technology, research and development, "serve the primary objectives of socialist construction" and therefore must be "directed towards the maximum attainment of social relevance." The educational movement, thus strives for the integration of the university with the needs of the communes, factories, research institutes, etc., so that all sectors of society function for the social good.

CINEASTE, Vol. VII, No. 1

333 Sixth Avenue, New York, 10014. Subscriptions: $4 per year. *"The Audience Should Not Just Be Passive Spectators—An Interview with Francesco Rossi."* Rossi notes the persuasive power of film but refuses to propagandize: he desire the collaboration of the audience in the search for truth. Though maintaining that that truth can never be known, the search for it creates disorder and asks disturbing questions. Rossi explains how he uses stories of historical individuals as catalysts to an analysis of the broader social reality in which they operate. *"Gian Maria Volonté Talks about Cinema and Politics."* Volonté discusses the political nature of all film and the choices which such an awareness leads to. He ends by arguing for a militant cinema where acting is seen as political activity. LENNY RUBENSTEIN, *"The Wondrous Return of the Wacky Monty Python's Flying Circus."* A discussion of the humor of this British team, its attack on all pretensions and gallantry, its roots in the humor of Spike Milligan and the Goon Show of the Fifties. ANDRE PAQUET, *"Toward an Arab and African Cinema."* An overview of the 1974 Carthage Film Festival and an evaluation of developments in sub-Saharan and Arab cinema with respect to issues of realist and revolutionist film—the former being viewed as potentially oppressive in its assertion of the status quo. CAROL WIKARSKI, *"Attica."* The film by Cinda Firestone about the Attica uprising chronicles the retaking of the prison, and warns against too much trust in traditional media. Lies fed to reporters about Attica were used to manipulate public opinion. NANCH SCHOLAR, *"Mädchen in Uniform."* This 1931 film was the first in Germany to be cooperatively produced and is overtly anti-nationalist and anti-authoritarian. The film's construction is dialectical, the authoritarian tactics of the headmistress colliding with the human and emotional responsiveness of Manuela, who leads to the breakthrough in the system by her declaration of love for another woman. MICHAEL SHELDIN, *"15 Notes on Freebie and the Bean."* An examination of the ideological nature of this poorly received cop film which concludes that the filmmakers sincerely intended to present a view of the most immature and venal aspects of the subject-matter in the hopes of facilitating understanding and perhaps amelioration. JUDITH TAYLOR, *"Did She or Didn't She? Mystifying Women's Oppression."* "The Legend of Lizzie Borden" shown on television analyzes her parricide from a Freudian, bourgeois perspective, hinting at the social and economic bases of women's oppression, but finally using individualistic psychology as an explanation. The audience is made to feel that there

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

are broad social issues involved, but is given no tools by which to analyze social phenomena. The program is a good example of the tendency of art in capitalist society to mystify reality in the name of ambiguity.

CULTURAL HERMENEUTICS, Vol. 3, No. 3

D. Reidel Publishing Company, P.O. Box 17, Dordrecht, Holland. Subscription (4 issues): approx. $36. HERBERT G. REID, RANDAL H. IHARA, *"Ideology Critique and Problems of Student Consciousness in the United States."* This analysis of student identity is concerned with how culture and ideology are reproduced in the classroom through the formation of an identity constituted on external social relations. The task of critical political education is defined as the reconstitution of the cultural forms through which consciousness is expressed. This direction of critical political education then serves as a basis for an outline of a specific relation between theory and praxis.

DIALECTICAL ANTHROPOLOGY, Vol.1, No. 1 (November, 1975)

Elsevier Scientific Publishing Company, Box 211, Amsterdam. $19.95 US per year. STANLEY DIAMOND, *"The Marxist Tradition as a Dialectical Anthropology."* A statement of policy by the editor and founder. To make Marxism into a "critical instrument" rather than a "rationalization for the exercise of repressive political power" the image of a schizoid Marx must be discarded and Marxism cannot be seen as either just economics or textual interpretation. It is the task of anthropology to temper the "Europo-centrism" of revolutionaries by providing a fuller understanding of primitive and peasant peoples in a search for "the needs, possibilities, and revolutionary imperatives of the human race." EUGENE E. RUYLE, *"Mode of Production and Mode of Exploitation: The Mechanical and the Dialectical."* Ruyle argues for a "dialectical" typology incorporating the "mode of exploitation," which is seen as consisting of (1) exploitative techniques, such as slavery, rent, usury, etc., (2) the state, and (3) the church or other sacred institutions. A familiar argument in unfamiliar terms; Ruyle does not mention either the concept of hegemony or Critical Theory. DAVID DICKSON, *"Technology and Social Reality."* Technological innovation and development serve, materially and symbolically, to further the interests and ideology of the dominant class. It must be realized that scientists and technologists are the "direct accomplices" of those who control our society and that "political struggle belongs as much to the laboratory bench as it does to the factory floor." PHILIP L. KOHL, *"The Archeology of Trade."* The discussion of trade in terms of problems in archeology. A (superficially) Marxist approach to social or cultural wholes is seen as an improvement over current dehumanized systems models. The study of trade can throw light on the economic and non-economic factors of the relations of production and on the emergence of social classes in archeological societies. HENRI WALD, *"Reflections on Language and Thought."* An evolutionary sketch of the interaction of modes of expression and understanding. Alphabetic writing, for example, represents progress, but also "the unilateral development of reason at the cost of sensibility." Man, therefore, must go beyond science and return to the critical dialectic of philosophy. STEPHEN P. DUNN, *"New Departures in Soviet Theory and Practice of Ethnicity."* A review of two recent Soviet works (Iu. V. Arutiunian, *et al.*, *Sotsial'noe i Natsional'noe*, and Iu. V. Bromlei, *Etnos i etnografiia*—Moscow, 1973) in the field of ethnosociology. Aside from ethnographic material, the works give evidence that (1) issues of Soviet nationality policy are being discussed in terms of factual data and research findings used in the "development" of ethnic relations, and (2) important conceptual shifts have taken place at the theoretical level, e.g., the "ethnos" is now defined in terms if ideological culture and self-awareness that are independent of prevailing or particular political and economic conditions, in contradiction to earlier Stalinist doctrine. EUGENE GENOVESE, *"Class, Culture and Historical Process."* A favorable review of Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations* (Chicago, 1974), a collection of essays on slavery and peasantry in the Caribbean.

GREEN MOUNTAIN QUARTERLY, Vol. 1, No. 1 (November, 1975)

462 North Main Street, Oskhosh, Wisconsin 54901. $3 for four issues. RICHARD ROTHSTEIN, *"The Urban Ethnic Working Class."* Reviewing the long history of oppression and exploitation of white workers from early peasant immigrants to contemporary urban workers, this essay examines the growing confrontation between blacks demanding equality and white workers clinging to what they have. JOHN McDERMOTT, *"Campus Missionaries: The Laying-on of Culture."* Concerned with the rigid professionalization occurring in the vast majority of college faculties, this essay urges professors and students to take up the common task of rebuilding the vitality of a popular resistance culture.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

GREEN MOUNTAIN QUARTERLY, Vol. 1, No. 2 (February, 1976)

ELEANOR MARX, EDWARD AVELING, *"The Woman Question."* In part, a review of Bebel's *Woman under Socialism*, this piece written in 1886 explains the position of Socialists with respect to the woman question. Emphasizing the practical problems of women's liberation, the essay discusses marriage, divorce, sex, prostitution, etc., and concludes with comments on the future position of women in socialism. HENRIETTE ROLAND-HOLST, *"Feminism, Working Women, and Social Democracy."* Though written in 1903, this analysis of feminism and the working class movement by a leading activist and theoretician of Dutch socialism, is extremely relevant today. Beginning its discussion wth the position of women in capitalist society, the essay examines the emergence of feminism as a movement for women's rights whose membership (and consequently aims and demands) were predominantly middle class. VIRGINIA SCOTT, *Poems for a Friend in Late Winter*. Three poems.

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Spring 1976)

Issue Theme: "Beyond the Bourgeois Subject"

EIKE GEBHARDT, *"Identity is a Total Institution."* This consists mainly of a critical overview of recent sociological and psychological research on the problems of self, ego, values, identity, and roles. BERNARD WILLMS, *"Karl Marx—Or the Attempt to Liquidate the Bourgeois Subject."* Marx retained the emancipatory aspects of the concept of the bourgeois, radicalizing it in light of capitalist society's failure to realize its own universal claims. Once the falseness of the bourgeois self-conception had been analyzed, the problem arose as to what agent could truly realize the emancipatory content of the bourgeois concept of freedom. The proletariat was assigned the task, but without the requisite mediations which would justify this. In fact, there was a tendency to lose precisely that dimension of subjectivity which was capitalism's progressive achievement—the power of negativity. P. PARIN, F. MORGENTHALER, G. PARIN-MATTHEY, *"Psychoanalytic Reflections of the Group Ego."* A discussion of ego-structure and morality among the Dogon of Mali. ERICH WULFF, *"Questions of Cross-Cultural Psychiatry."* A cross-cultural study of identity-formation among the Vietnamese and in modern Western societies aimed at explaining the prevalence of ego disorders in the latter and their absence in the former. Wulff first attacks ethnocentric concepts in psychology while universalize what are historically and culturally specific phenomena. He then shows that Western concepts of 'self' are inapplicable to Vietnamese society. Then the contrast with the West is developed through an analysis of personality structures in capitalist society. HANS PETER DREITZEL, *"Social Roles and Political Emancipation."* The author defends the relevance of role theory to critical analysis of modern societies and advances specific theses to indicate its utility. The concept of role is of value in analyzing the mediation of base and superstructure, and can be used to thematize the degree and mode of social integration of individuals. Throughout Dreitzel emphasizes the tension in social action between role identification and role distance and the importance this has for a theory of alienation and subjectivity.

KURSBUCH, No. 40 (June, 1975)

Issue Theme: "Beruf: Langer oder kurzer Marsch?"

Potsdamer Strasse 98, 1 Berlin 30. DM 8. WOLFGANG TRAKL, *"Berufsperspektiven? Rede und Gegenrede."* A bitter commentary which argues that the incorporation of the left into the socializing institutions of society has produced within individuals a recapitulation of the "dialectic of Enlightenment." MATTHIS DIENSTAG, *"Wider einen linken Saubermann."* A reply to Trakl which charges him with an "unhappy consciousness" stemming from the illusory expectations of the student movement with its juxtaposition of a "bad totality" and the moral vision of its eschatological overcoming. ROSEMARIE KAMP, JULIE MERTEN, *"Grund-Schulung."* A personal account by two young teachers of the sobering effects of leaving the isolated left in-groups of the university and trying to carry their convictions into their work. The illusions of radical change are displaced first by fearful, guilt-ridden adaptation and then a gradual discovery of small steps toward change possible within the school and teachers' associations. ANNA BERGER, *"Sozialklempner oder Anwalt der Betroffenen?"* An analysis of the occupational realities of social work, one of the most popular choices for "revolutionary professional praxis." While such praxis is deemed impossible in the light of frustrating experience, a great deal has been learned about the actual conditions of social change and the possible contribution of social workers to this process. ANONYMOUS, *"Aerztliche Praxis und politische Arbeit im Krankenhaus."* A group of 6 Berlin physicians describes the structural conditions of West German health care, report some of their personal experiences, and indicate some approaches to effective political work in the medical profession. UWE WESEL, *"Vom*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Wirken des Juristen auf die Gesellschaft." An assessment of the reform movement in West German law over the past decade. The momentum of the movement of progressive lawyers has a small, but significant, part to play which has been slighted in previous Marxist discussions. Annexed is a useful bibliographical essay on relevant documents. KLAUS ESCHEN, *"Vor den Schranken: Erfahrungen eines linken Anwalts."* Reflections on the experience of working as a left-wing lawyer. ROBERT BOSSHARD, *"Wem Gott ein Amt gab... Oder die pfiffige Intelligenz des Amateurs."* An insightful essay on the isolating consequences of professional commitment and the difficulties of amateur alternatives. The discussion is based primarily on the author's own experiences in city planning. HANS MAGNUS ENZENSBERGER, *"Karrieren."* A series of short poems on the careers of G. Haussmann, F.W. Taylor, E.J. Marey, and Ugo Cerletti taken from the author's collection *Mausoleum*. MARIA-ANTONIETTA MACCIOCCHI, *"Besuch im Elfenbeinturm."* Extract from the author's *Pour Gramsci* in which her bizarre visit with Piero Sraffa in Cambridge is recounted. KLAUS STILLER *"Traumberufe."* Ironic descriptions of such "dream" occupations as plane hijacker, bank robber, etc. WOLF-DIETER NARR, *"Anhörung: Zur Frabe, ob ich auf dem Boden der freiheitlich-demokratischen Grundordnung stehe."* A "psychogram" of the author's hearing to determine whether he would be excluded from public employment for political reasons. Hints are given as to how to endure such an experience while maintaining one's sanity, political integrity, and job. KARL MARKUS MICHEL, *"An die Damen und Herren Volksvertreter: Untertänige Bitte um Wiedereinführung der Zensur."* A satirical plea for the introduction of political censorship.

LEFT CURVE, No. 5 (Fall-Winter 1975)

1230 Grant Ave., Box 302, San Francisco, California 94133. CSABA POLONY, RICHARD OLSEN, *"4 Questions and Responses."* The editors explain their relationship to modern art and to Marxism, their attempt to synthesize aesthetic theory and political art, and their plans with *Left Curve*. TIM DRESCHER, *"DINT: Museums and Society."* RON WHITE, *"Museums are Poison."* These two critiques of museums as repressive institutions, taking off from the frequent attack centered on the exclusion of minority artists, examine the oppressive qualities of museums themselves. While no total theory is presented, important issues are formulated: museums as prisons, the role of framings and context, oppressive architecture of contemplation, dehumanization, the depoliticization of political art in museums. BRUCE KAIPER, *"The Human Object and its Capitalist Image."* In this visual essay, the author uses prose and illustrations to examine the relationships among capitalist production, alienation, and modern art. The problematic critical reproduction of fetishism and technologist ideology in conceptualist art is well demonstrated, particularly the similar concepts of time in, for example, Duchamp and Taylorism. CLARITA ROJA, *"On Art and the Philippine Revolution." In this short essay and* one of the accompanying poems, Roja vindicates the political function of art while attacking those who only value lyricism, in particular, bourgeois publishers. The issue also includes revolutionary posters from Portugal, paintings by Richard Olsen, poetry by Margaret Randall, Michael Peterson, John Curl, Roger Taus, Csaba Polony, and interview with Alfredo Rostgaard, art editor of *Tricontinental Magazine*, selections from the 74-75 catalogue of *Reflections Press*, and a letter from Ruchell Magee.

LEVIATHAN, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1975)

Claus Koch, D 1000 Berlin 12, Mommsenstrasse 66, West Germany. DM 45 for 4 issues (students DM 30). UWE WESEL, *"Das Gericht und die Krise."* ELLEN REINKE, *"Aktionforschung als politische Bewegung."* This reports some findings of research on the dynamics of interaction and communication within a group of law students and ex-convicts. It shows some of the changes of individuals' self-conceptions, and the changes necessary before solidarity between students and prisoners could emerge. FRITZ BOEHLE, DIETER SAUER, *"Intensivierung der Arbeit und staatliche Sozialpolitik."* In West German capitalism there has been a tendency to increase the effort intensity of work. This presupposes employment conditions which so far have largely been secured by the actions of the state and trade unions. Since the 1960s, however, social and labor market conditions have arisen which seem to indicate that those conditions of employment stability can no longer be taken for granted. This threatens attempts at increasing the effort intensity of work and, thus, threatens the extraction of surplus value. CLAUS OFFE, *"Anmerkungen."* Offe comments that three unresolved problems remain in this analysis. First, the fact of "intensification" cannot be deduced from the theorem of the falling rate of profit; the accumulating units do in fact have the option to pursue a type of technological change that would be labor-saving, rather than labor-intensifying. Hence the phenomenon of intensification

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

needs empirical validation and more specific explanation. Second, the supposed functional reciprocity between state social policies (in its organization of the intensification drive) seems to be a figment of functionalist imagination. Finally, the argument that the relationship between social policies and capitalist strategies of labor utilization has now reached a crucial stage remains unsupported by any evidence. WIKING EHLERT, *"Politische Planung—und was davon übrig bleibt."* A critique of planning in West Germany which shows that (a) the bureaucratic form of routinized activities keeps planning from being effective; (b) planning is largely organized on the outskirts of the state agencies and often operationalized for ideological ends; (c) planning is integrated where it does not interfere with bureaucracy; and (d) the theoretical orientation of "critical" planning science has definitely hampered the analyses of these processes. EIKE HENNIG, *"Notizen zum Realbegriff einer demokratie-theoretischen Kommunikationsforschung."* There is a qualitative difference between communication *for* the masses and communication *of* the masses. This points to the need for further theoretical and practical work ("action research") to comprehend the function of different kinds of communication inside a "formal," capitalist democracy. MICHAEL TH. GREVEN, *"Zur ideologischen Funktion von Theorien kollektiven Verhaltens."*

MARXISMUS DIGEST, No. 24 (October-December, 1975)

Issue Theme: "Kritik der bürgerlichen Wissenschaftstheorie"

Institut für marxistische Studien und Forschungen, Frankfurt am Main, Liebigstr. 6. Published four times a year, single issue DM 6; subscription DM 22 (for students, DM 18). GEORG DOMIN, *"Wissenschaft und Wissenschaftsfortschritt in der Sicht bürgerlicher Sozialwissenschaften."* The primary function of bourgeois social science is "system maintenance;" thus, it cannot deal with the political-economic and historical factors that help to explain science's development in relation to society. Bourgeois sociology of science can be analyzed on the basis of the *partial* aspects of reality that are incorporated in specific approaches, e.g., Carnap, Popper, Barber, Merton, and Storer. Efforts towards a more comprehensive sociology of science, which must, however, be consistent with the requirements of capitalism, have resulted in new and conflicting perspectives, as expressed, for example, in the "Habermas-Luhmann Debate." S.R. MIKULINSKIJ, L.A. MARKOVA, *"Zur unterschiedlichen Auffassung der Triebkräfte der Wissenschaftsentwicklung."* Current bourgeois sociology of science has begun to focus on the empirical relation between science and society. Two trends can be distinguished: (1) the history of science is explained in terms of laws immanent in science (Koyré), and (2) the interaction between science and society affects the development and status of science (Lilley, Needham, Zilsel, Kuhn). The latter approach is broader, but Koyré's work should not be ignored because its emphasis on the relative autonomy of scientific laws is a corrective to vulgar determinism. GEORG DOMIN, HANS-HERRMANN LANFERMANN, *"Der funktionalistische Typus einer bürgerlichen Wissenschaftstheorie und Tendenzen seiner konzeptionellen Wandlung."* Storer's work is analyzed as a systematic attempt to conceptualize the function of science, thus continuing the work of Parsons, Merton, and Barber. Storer's emphasis on "creativity" limits his approach; Luhmann, in contrast, by analyzing scientific truth criteria is able to establish a more general and sophisticated conceptual framework. His work suggests that functionalism is too narrow to explain the relation between science and society, since it does not include the historical dimension. But Luhmann, in turn, cannot go beyond an evolutionist interpretation of history. HANS-HERRMANN LANFERMANN, KARL-FRIEDRICH TEINZ, *"Zur Kritik der Systemkonzeptionen in bürgerlichen Wissenschaftstheorien."* A competent analysis of Luhmann, with the conclusion that his abstract style and emphasis on science's autonomy serve to mystify the function of science under capitalism: science is legitimated as "value free," hence it can be used in the interests of the ruling class. HANS-HERMANN LANFERMANN, *"Die sozialökonomische Determination der Wissenschaft um die Anti-Science-Bewegung im staatsmonopolistischen Kapitalismus."* The analysis of the anti-science movement suggests that it is neither organized nor institutionalized, nor can it be seen dialectically as a response to the "technocrats." Two attitudes help explain the movement: (1) some scientists are aware of the (negative) social implications of their work; (2) romantic-anarchist segments of the New Left object to science as it is taught and practiced by universities. In addition, science has lost "credibility" because of the continued existence of social problems, in spite of spectacular achievements. Thus, science gets blamed for the conflicts and crises of capitalism. What is required is a Marxist interpretation of science's function under capitalism. GUENTER KROEBER, *"Zum Problem der Gesetzmässigkeiten und Triebkräfte in der Entwicklung der Wissenschaft."* The problems of establishing empirical criteria with which to evaluate the growth

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of science are exceedingly complex. Quantification is insufficient, since it involves the reification of scientific activity and a mechanistic explanation of its relation to society. But in the absence of socialism, science follows the laws of capitalism. For science to respond to society's needs, its growth must be intensive, rather than extensive. S.S. GUSEV, *"Einige Kriterien der qualitativen Veränderung der wissenschaftlichen Kenntnis."* A formal analysis of the criteria and language of science, with emphasis on the resolution of contradictions between scientific theory and research findings. Parameters are specified to determine at what points contradictions result in a theoretical "revolution." B.M. MAJZEL, *"Das Erkenntnisproblem in den philosophischen Arbeiten K.R. Poppers in den 60er Jahren."* A thorough analysis of Popper's earlier positivism as it develops towards a more "pluralistic" but still narrow interpretation of truth criteria, since his epistemology is essentially subjectivistic. GIOVANNI BERLINGUER, *"Eine neue Politik für wissenschaftliche und technologische Forschung in Italien."* Post-war developments in Italy led to a stagnation of science. In the allocation of funds Italy—compared with other industrialized countries—ranks lowest; in addition, moneys spent on R&D are frequently wasted because they are spent at random. The main reason for this situation lies in the political, economic, and social conditions, particularly as reflected in higher education.

MERIP REPORTS, No. 43 (December, 1975)

Middle East Research & Information Project, P.O. Box 3122, Washington, D.C. 20010. $7.50 per year. HELMUT RICHARDS, *"Land Reform and Agribusiness in Iran."* The author shows how a class consisting of upper strata peasants was needed to counter the growing strength and dissatisfaction of the disenfranchised middle class. He also indicates that Western Feudalism never existed in Iran as no landowners held anything approaching feudal manors. STAFF, *"The United Nations and the Palestinian Struggle."* A thoughtful piece on the UN resolution on Zionism and possible US strategies. The resolution could have been part of a US plan to push the PLO more and more into conventional diplomacy; while the US public opposition could be a smokescreen behind which Kissinger's PLO strategy is unfolding. STAFF, *"New Iranian Offensive in Oman."* Discusses Iranian intervention in Oman and present state of fighting.

MERKUR (January, 1976)

8 München 43, Ainmillerstrasse 26, Postfach 568. This issue contains a discussion between Habermas and Hennis on the problem of *Legitimation*. Both contributions were previously presented at the Congress of the 'Deutsche Vereinigung für politische Wissenschaften' in October, 1975.

THE MINNESOTA REVIEW, No. 5 (Fall 1975)

Box 5416, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211. $2 per issue. Special Supplement: "The Marxist Alternative to the Traditions." The importance of such a collection of articles is to legitimate a certain type of inquiry and to indicate a breadth of scope in the kinds of Marxist literary analysis practiced in the U.S. today. Some of the applied criticism is interesting and inoffensive. What makes this collection so disappointing is that, where it is theoretically ambitions, it is mostly a *defensive* replay of the crudities *offensively* propagated in the thirties; that it mostly fails to break any new ground in tneorizing the important aesthetic questions (e.g., the relations between aesthetic value—social value—formal value) that have never been adequately conceptualized by Marxist criticism; and that it mostly fails to move beyond the tired, worn-out empiricist, productivist categories and to demarcate suggestive frameworks within which the significant and strategic questions could even be raised. FREDRIC JAMESON, *"Notes Toward a Marxist Cultural Politics."* In an eclectic and surprisingly empty effort to avoid 'divisiveness,' Jameson argues the need to invent a Marxist cultural politics under the novel circumstances of the present consumerist stage of capitalism, or what he calls " 'repressively tolerant' Fascism II." Rejects the notion of American 'exceptionalism' in claiming that the economic crisis is restoring to the U.S. proletariat its "necessary structural radicalism." Stresses both that the contradictions of the sixties have, in the seventies, taken on their "ultimate and classic economic appearance" with inflation, unemployment, etc., and that cultural phenomena acquire new strategic importance. BRUCE ERLICH, *"Social Action and Literary Fable: Some Openings for Dialogue."* Sets out to construct a non-dogmatic Marxist position in relation to Wellek and Warren's intrinsic-extrinsic polarization. Insists that "Marxists work from the economic to the literary." Oscillating eclectically between crudity and confusion, he seeks to reinterpret the chain of causality that produces thought as 'class practice.' Employs and reinterprets every cliché from individualism-collectivism to reflection theory, realism, and sociological 'equivalents.' BRUCE FRANKLIN, *" 'A' is for Afro-American: A Primer on the Study of American Literature."* Sets out to show that

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in the official canons of U.S. literary culture, the culture of poor and working people is suppressed in favor of that congenial to a professional elite with a class and race bias. Argues that the most distinctive feature of U.S. history is Afro-American slavery and its consequences, and that Afro-American music and poetry have formed the one distinctive and vastly influential poetic tradition within U.S. literature, representing the only unique major contribution U.S. poetics has made to world culture. Looks forward to the inevitable *replacement* of the current canon by the literature of the oppressed. JEAN FRANCO, *"Dependency Theory and Literary History: The Case of Latin America."* An intelligent, sensitive attempt, with the aid of dependency theory, to challenge the selective consumption and evaluation of Latin American literature, and to provide a framework for Latin American literary history and interpretation that foregrounds the technology of domination and the forms of resistance, with particular attention to the changing social functions and historical specificity of print and oral media of communication. PATRICK STORY, *"Housman's Cherry Trees: Toward the Practice of Marxist Explication."* Assaults Housman's "Loveliest of Trees" to demonstrate in practice the superiority of Marxism over formalism in the criticism of individual poems. ROGER HOWARD, *"Contradiction and the Poetic Image"* Maoist stress on contradiction within imagery in analyzing the way poetry trains the mind. The materialist poet must aim for material images where contradiction is made explicit. SCOTT SANDERS, *"Marxism and the Writing of Fiction."* Assault on the heritage of literary modernism through superficial typological clichés. Sets out to delineate, for the guidance of novelists, a Marxist fictional worldview. The novel informed by Marxism will rest upon historical perspective and anthropological optimism. SHEILA DELANEY, *"Sexual Economics, Chaucer's Wife of Bath, and* The Book of Margery Kempe." Seeks to investigate the psycho-sexual effects of economic necessity; specifically concerned with the nature of the oppression and struggle of women in the Middle Ages. JUDITH MAYNE, *"Eisenstein, Vertov, and the Montage Principle."* Discussion of Vertov's and Eisenstein's theories of montage, as the theoretical and practical roots of the self-conscious contemporary film with its intersection of fictional and documentary techniques. DAVID BATHRICK, *"The Politics of Reception Theory in the GDR."* A brief, useful summary of certain elements and problems involved in aesthetic reception theory, particularly in Hans Robert Jauss' critique of both formalism and Marxism. TERRY EAGLETON, *"Pierre Macherey and the Theory of Literary Production."* A highly sophisticated internal debate within structuralist discourse. In one of the rare theoretical highlights of this collection, presents and criticizes Macherey's Althusserian literary theory. THOMAS A. ZANIELLO, *"Ten Propositions of Contemporary Chinese Aesthetics."* An outline and bibliographical guide for the study of Maoist aesthetics, built on the principle that all creative work has mainly a political aspect. Depressing.

MONTHLY REVIEW, Vol. 27, No. 8 (January, 1976)

62 West 14th St., New York, 10011. $11 per year. HARRY MAGDOFF, *"Capital, Technology, and Development."* Revised version of an October 1975 talk given to Arab students in Chicago emphasizes the problems of blindly adapting a western capitalist model of development which ignores human concerns. ANNETTE T. RUBINSTEIN, *"Attica Now."* Impassioned description of the politics of New York state's "investigative" cover-up of Attica. JOANNE BARKAN PROCTOR, ROBERT PROCTOR, *"Capitalist Development, Class Struggle, and Crisis in Italy, 1945-1975."* Survey of postwar Italian political economy shows the reawakening of political and trade union working class activity, and discusses the possibilities of a left coalition emerging from the present trade crisis. GILBERT W. MERKX, *"Argentina: Peronism and Power."* Analysis of the background and present components of Argentina's political crisis.

MONTHLY REVIEW, Vol. 27, No. 9 (February, 1976)

AZINNA NWAFOR, *"The Liberation of Angola."* Abbreviated lecture text discusses the three parties in the Angolan civil war (FNLA, UNITA, MPLA) from the standpoint of the superiority of the MPLA. ABDULLAH AL ASHTAL, *"Politics in Command: A Case Study of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen."* Transcript of an October, 1975 address which focuses on economic development from a political perspective, tracing the pre- and post-independence activities of Yemen's National Liberation Front. HAL DRAPER, *"How Solzhenitsyn Quotes."* A correction of Solzhenitsyn's July, 1975 speech printed in the AFL-CIO *American Federationist* which shows his "quotes" supporting the contention that Marxism has always opposed freedom to be either fabrications, inaccurate paraphrases or interpretative mistakes. KAREN SACKS, *"Class Roots of Feminism."* History of the interrelations of the three women's movements between 1820 and 1920. These groups were: (1) an industrial working-class women's movement emphasizing economic improvement and political equality; (2) a working- and middle-class

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

black women's movement which opposed racism, and emphasized economic improvement as well as legal equality with whites; (3) a white middle-class women's movement which only emphasized legal equality with men.

NEUES FORUM, Nos. 257-258 (May-June, 1975)

Museumstrasse 5, Vienna A-1070. DM 6.50. ERICH FRIED, *"Nichts gelernt seit Hitler: Sturmzeichen der deutschen Demokratie."* An Austrian poet who fled to England in 1938 asks whether West Germany has learned the lessons of liberal democracy. Expressing doubt, he nevertheless concludes with the words of Helmut Gollwitzer and Heinrich Böll upon receiving the Ossietzky Medal—"Nicht aufgeben, nur nicht aufgeben!" (Don't give up, just don't give up!). HEIDI PATAKI, *"Frauen sind keine Engel: Oesterreichische Journalisten zur Frauenbewegung."* An analysis of the distorted reporting by the Vienna press of a conference on diverse aspects of art and female emancipation. JEAN-PIERRE VIGIER, *"Haie sterben gemeinsam: Monopole im Wettlauf."* Translation of an article from *Le Monde diplomatique*; a dramatic but dubious prophecy that the combination of economic crisis and inflation in 1973 marks the beginning of a depression worse than that of 1929. AIKE BLECHSCHMIDT, *"Krise: 2. Produktions- und Absatzkrise 1929 und 1974: Ein Vergleich."* Continuation of a theme from nos. 253-254; first installment of a detailed comparision of the crises of 1929 and the present. A valuable antidote to Vigier's dogmatism. *"Zwei Arbeiterklassen:"* MARIOS NIKOLINAKOS, *"Den letzten beissen die Hunde: Internationale Arbeitsteilung und Arbeiterimmigration."* A close analysis of the impact of recent economic changes on European guest workers by the author of a standard work on the subject. FOCUS-KOLLEKTIV, *"Die weissen Sklaven: Fremdarbeiter und Akkumulation in der Schweiz."* An account of the fate of foreign workers in Switzerland. EWALD WALTERSKIRCHEN, *"Wir da oben, ihr da unten: Fremdarbeiter und Konjunkturzyklus in Oesterreich."* The case of foreign workers in Austria. HERMANN SCHUERRER, *"Sie sassen mit Kurfürst Himmler unter den Linden."* Excerpt from the author's new novel. BALAZS NEMETH, *"Thomas Müntzer's Hoffnung von unten."* A survey of Müntzer's contribution on the occasion of the 450th anniversary of his execution. FRITZ J. RADDATZ, *"War Marx' Sohn von Engels?"* Excerpt from a new Marx biography which presents the evidence for the thesis that the illegitimate son self-attributed to Engels was actually that of Marx. BENNO SAREL, *"Kritik der Planwirtschaft: Bürokratie und Arbeiterwiderstand in der DDR."* Excerpt from a book which first appeared in French and German in 1958 and which describes the Taylorization of industrial labor under Communist auspices. GERHARD ZWERENZ, *"Zwei deutsche Literaturen."* A comparison of the literatures of East and West Germany, especially in terms of the critical reception accorded to each other.

NEUES FORUM, Nos. 259-260 (July-August, 1975)

"Sozialdemokratie." Perspectives on the forthcoming Austrian general election. *"30 Jahre Dings, 20 Jahre Bums."* Series of documents on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Austrian peace agreement, including PETER HANDKE's *"Brutale Gespreiztheit der Obrigkeit: Persönliche Bermerkungen zum Jubiläum der Republik."* Some controversial remarks by the Austrian TV network to celebrate the occasion. ERKIN OEZGUEC, *"Der Türken Kreuzberg: Illusion und Scheitern der Arbeitsemigration."* A report on Turkey and its foreign workers. JOHN BERGER, *"Saisonniers."* Translation of *New Left Review* article on seasonal workers in Switzerland. HEIDI PATAKI, *"Saaltochter."* Personal experience of a summer of exploited labor in Switzerland is recalled by a *Neues Forum* staff member. AIKE BLECHSCHMIDT, *"Feuerwehrreformismus. Vergleich alter und neuer Weltwirtschaftskrise II."* Second part of an article begun in No. 257-258. ERNEST MANDEL, *"Das Lächeln im Koma."* Excerpt from a prognosis of current economic trends. ALFREDO FRADE, *"Die Arbeiterräte entscheiden alles."* An interview with a young Portuguese leftist. MICHAEL SIEGERT, *"Bonaparte kommt: Panorama der portugiesischen Revolution."* Report on the situation in Portugal by a *Neues Forum* staff member. FRIEDRICH GEYRHOFER, *"Glanz und Elend der Regisseure: Zur Soziologie des Films, II."* Continuation of a series of essays on the sociology of film.

NEW LEFT REVIEW, No. 92 (July-August, 1975)

7 Carlisle Street, London W1V 6NL, England. Subscription: $16 per year. ARTHUR SCARGILL, *"The New Unionism."* An extensive interview with the president of the Yorkshire local of the National Union of Miners in Great Britain, which provides a great deal of information on the workings of the union, but which falls far short of demonstrating the growth of the "new unionism" which *NLR* so desperately wants to conjure up. Manipulation and the myth of nationalization loom large behind Scargill's militant rhetoric. LUCIEN GOLDMANN,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Dialectical Materialism and Literary History." Written in 1950, this essay outlines the main themes which Goldmann explored in his literary and philosophical studies, although the essay has very little content. IAN GOUGH, *"State Expenditure in Advanced Capitalism."* A long, detailed study of the relationship between state expenditures, inflation, and capitalist crises. Gough argues against breakdown theories, substituting for them a theory of class struggle. This article provides ample statistical material, much of which is interesting and educational, but its overall intent is to complement the dubious hopes represented by the Scargill interview. GREGOR BENTON, *"The Yenan 'Literary Opposition'."* WANG SHI-WEI, *"Wild Lily."* TING LING, *"Thoughts on 8 March (Women's Day)."* LO FENG, *"It is still the Age of the Tsa-wen."* The first essay here introduces the following three examples of critical essays composed during the Yenan period of the Chinese Revolution. They deal with problems of hierarchy, freedom of expression, alienation, and sexism as experienced by young Chinese revolutionaries in Yenan.

NEW LEFT REVIEW, No. 93 (September-October, 1975)

LUCIO COLLETTI, *"Marxism and the Dialectic."* Expanding on comments previously made in an interview published in *NLR* 86, Colletti discusses the distinction between "dialectical contradictions" and "real oppositions." Taking the latter, especially as developed by Kant, to be a fundamental truth of all science while relegating the former, which embodies the notion of negation, to the fantasies of metaphysics, Colletti attempts to account for two Marxes: Marx the scientist, observer of real oppositions and political economist, and Marx the critic of political economy, theorist of the dialectical opposition and alienation—Marx the philosopher. Claiming only to "register this fact" of the two Marxes, Colletti ends the article by posing the question of whether or not these dual aspects can be brought together in a unified science. Claiming to embody a critique of *Diamat*, Colletti continues nevertheless the attempt to realize that very project. K. DAMODARAN, *"Memoirs of an Indian Communist."* An interview with a member of the Communist Party of India, conducted by Tariq Ali, which traces the history of that party, its splits and political impotence. RICHARD WOLLHEIM, *"Psychoanalysis and Feminism."* A friendly critique of Juliet Mitchell's book of the same title. JOHN MERRINGTON, *"Town and Country in the Transition to Capitalism."* A provocative, highly synthetic essay, which argues that the urban-rural relationship in feudal and early modern Europe must be seen as a unified phenomenon growing out of the parcellization of sovereignty in feudal social relations. This piece was an important influence on some of the key points developed by Perry Anderson in his book *Lineages of the Absolutist State*. VICTOR KIERNAN, *"A Scottish Road to Socialism?"* A review of *The Red Paper on Scotland*, ed. Gordon Brown (Edinburgh, 1975).

NEW LEFT REVIEW, No. 94 (November-December, 1975)

TOM NAIRN, *"The Modern Janus."* A critique of various interpretations of nationalism, including what has passed for a Marxist interpretation. He argues for an understanding of nationalism which begins from the phenomenon of uneven development within the world capitalist economy and the ideology of progress. ROY BHASKAR, *"Feyerabend and Bachelard: Two Philosophies of Science."* An informative essay which summarizes much of the most significant recent work in the philosophy and history of science. Bhaskar's own perspective rests on a dubious distinction between "intransitive" and "transitive" objects in science, the first corresponding to "the unchanging real objects that exist outside the scientific process" and and the second referring to 'the changing cognitive objects that are produced within science as a function of scientific practice." Bhaskar utilizes this distinction to buttress an Althusserian notion of philosophy as being devoid of an object. REGIS DEBRAY, *"Image of the People."* A review of T.J. Clark's book of the same title which deals with Courbet within the context of the revolution of 1848. CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS, *"Detente and Destabilization: Report from Cyprus."* A review of recent Cypriot history and assessment of the current situation there. JACQUELINE ROSE, JULIET MITCHELL, LUCIEN REY, ALLAN BECKETT, JOHN HOWE, DAVID RUMNEY, *"The Freudian Slip."* Four short criticisms of Sebastiano Timpanaro's article on this subject in *NLR* 91. WALLY SECOMBE, *"Domestic Labour—Reply to Critics."* Continuation of a debate begun with Secombe's original essay in *NLR* 83 and the criticisms which appeared in *NLR* 89.

NEW LEFT REVIEW, No. 95 (January-February, 1976)

TERRY EAGLETON, *"Criticism and Politics: The Work of Raymond Williams."* Excerpted from Eagleton's forthcoming book, *Criticism and Ideology* (London, 1976), this essay attempts to survey the whole of Williams' impressive body of work, subjecting it to a quasi-structuralist critique. Consistently irritating in its use of such negatively interpreted terms as "populist,"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"humanist," "subjectivist," and "idealist" in attacking Williams, the article manages to make a point or two in regard to the limits of Williams' work in relation to poetry, drama and avant garde forms. On the whole, however, this is a dogmatic attack which does an injustice to Williams' idiosyncratic brilliance. Another example of *NLR*'s inability to come to terms with its own culture, opting instead for the most sterile version of post-Althusserian word games. BORIS VUSKOVIC, *"Social Inequality in Yugoslavia."* Focusing on a single municipality, this article outlines some of the basic inequalities that dominate Yugoslavia. The author is especially interested in bureaucracy and its relation to market production, concluding that bureaucratism is itself the greatest single cause of inequality. This article was originally published in Yugoslavia. SEBASTIANO TIMPANARO, *"Freudian Slips and Slips of the Freudians."* A response to critics of his previous *NLR* essay which begins with the following: "If I had to give as concise and accurate a definition as possible of the typical 'Western Marxist,' I would say: 'Someone who is firmly convinced that Freud is always right'." It is all downhill from there. JOHN MATHEWS, *"Law of the Sea."* A background article to the UN Conference on the Law of the Sea. NICOS POULANTZAS, *"The Capitalist State: A Reply to Miliband and Laclau."* Responding to criticisms of his work, Poulantzas attempts an auto-critique and exposition of his development since *Political Power and Social Classes.* MAXIME RODINSON, *"A Marxist View of Arabia."* Review of *Arabia without Sultans*, by Fred Halliday (New York, 1975). KARL SCHOER, *"Natalie Moszkowska and the Falling Rate of Profit."* A contribution to a discussion begun in *NLR* 86.

POLITICS AND SOCIETY, Vol. 5, No. 2 (1975)

Geron-X Inc., Publishers, Box 1108, Los Altos, California 94022. $9.50 for four issues. JANICE E. PERLMAN, *"Rio's Favelas and the Myth of Marginality."* Based on a study conducted in Rio de Janeiro in 1968-69 and a follow-up in 1973, this article traces the common-sense usages and theoretical origins of marginality theory. Deriving a series of testable propositions and contrasting these with empirical findings, it argues that the favelados (or urban squatters) are not marginal but integrated into the society, albeit in a manner detrimental to their interests. The concept of marginality has exceeded its use as a tool for identifying the urban poor and become a type of ideological justification for manipulating them in such a way as to increase rather than lessen the obstacles to their survival. This essay is part of the analysis developed more fully in the author's book, *The Myth of Marginality: Urban Poverty and Politics in Rio de Janeiro* (Berkeley, 1975). FREDERICK STIRTON WEAVER, *"Political Disintegration and Reconstruction in 19th Century Spanish America: The Class Basis of Political Change."* Rejecting liberal historiographical methodology (which focuses narrowly on prominent individuals, the influence of ideas, or the interaction of various elites) this essay relies on a class analysis to comprehend the diverse forces which promoted independence and shaped political institutions in the new Spanish American states. DAVID BARKIN, *"Education and Class Structure: The Dynamics of Social Change in Mexico."* Opposed to the general view that the expansion and improvement of the education system blurs class lines and thus advances the process of democratization, this essay provides an alternative explanation which places the school system within the process of capitalist development. Analyzing the role of the Mexican school system in reproducing class relationships, the paper focuses on the pattern of capitalist development in Mexico which promotes economic growth without creating sufficient employment opportunities to permit the possibility of a changing class structure. This allows for a close examination of the schools' role in limiting the possibilities of social and economic advance for members of the lower classes. FRANK HEARN, *"Remembrance and Critique: The Uses of the Past for Discrediting the Present and Anticipating the Future."* To demonstrate the connection between the remembered past and revolutionary activity, the changes in social protest activity which occured in England between 1750 and 1850 are examined. Analyzing the transformation of the pre-industrial mob into the working class movement, an assessment is made of the impact of the destruction of working class traditions, the suppression of play, the reification of time, and the replacement of the remembered past with an objective recorded past emptied of meaning, on social protest activity after 1840. DOUG DOWD, *"Social Commitment and Social Analysis: The Contribution of Paul Baran."* Baran's concept of economic surplus is seen as fundamental to understand contemporary monopoly capitalism and imperialism. Originally presented in a period of decline in both left activity in and analysis of industrial capitalist societies (i.e., 1950), it provides a framework for simultaneously comprehending the function of advanced industrial capitalism and the associated roadblocks to development in the Third World. The necessity of analyzing capitalism in terms combining economic, political, sociological and historical relationships, and national and international developments is understood from this conception.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

QUEST, A FEMINIST QUARTERLY, Vol. II, No. 2 (Fall 1975)

Issue theme: "Theories of Revolution"

P.O. Box 8843, Washington, D.C. 20003. Subscription: $7 per year (4 issues). LUCIA VALESKA, *"The Future of Female Separatism."* The pros and cons of separatism, both as a short-term organizational necessity and as a long-term political perspective. The struggle against heterosexuality as the cornerstone of male supremacy which divides women from each other through an allegiance to one man at home and all men outside of it is, according to the author, the political contribution of lesbians to the women's movement. Lesbianism is taken out of the realm of personal choice and placed in the political context of an attack on male supremacy. JOAN LANDES, *"Wages for Housework: Subsidizing Capitalism?"* This article borrows, on the one hand, from the James-Dalla Costa perspective to criticize traditional Marxism's exclusion of women from its analysis, and then, on the other, borrows from traditional Marxism to criticize the perspective of wages for housework. Neither critique works since Landes assumes a fundamental antagonism between them and fails to see a coincidence of some of their basic concerns. EMMA PRICE, *"Learning from the Left."* Sexism in the male left deprived feminists of knowledge of the tactics and strategy of "a movement which has actually been winning revolutions since 1917" (sic!). "Will it work?" replaces "what do we want?" as the significant strategic concern for this author. LINDA PHELPS, *"Patriarchy and Capitalism."* Explores the development of capitalism as it has transformed patriarchal relationships of male domination. The politics of socialist-feminism are then seen as an attempt to amplify Marxist categories to include various types of oppression not accounted for by notions of class exploitation. Socialist-feminism is seen to be inadequate, however, as long as it simply adds the feminist critique of patriarchal culture to a "real" Marxist social and economic analysis. CHARLOTTE BUNCH, *"Not for Lesbians Only."* Lesbianism is seen as an attack on the institution and ideology of heterosexuality as the basis for male supremacy. Every woman who accepts heterosexual domination receives benefits from male privilege and therefore indirectly has a stake in maintaining male supremacy. Heterosexuality upholds the home, family, and sexual division of labor. LINDA TEIXEIRA, *"The Next American Revolution."* NANCH HARSTOCK, *"Fundamental Feminism, Process and Perspective."* A critical response to the Socialist Feminist Conference of July, 1975. The author takes issue with: the assumption that feminism is a culture while socialism is a politics; the stated purpose of the conference *vis-à-vis* the autonomous women's movement (to "politicize" it), and the male left (to transform it from within, i.e., legitimate its claim to political and organizational hegemony); the elitism of vanguardist politics; and its lack of emphasis on the importance of the *process* of political change and the accompanying absence of any notion of self-transformation.

RADICAL AMERICA, Vol. 9, No. 6 (November-December, 1975)

P.O. Box B.N., Cambridge, Massachusetts 02140. $5 for four issues. TONY CLIFF, *"Portugal at the Crossroads."* Excerpted from *International Socialism* 81-82, which is reviewed at length in *Telos* 25, pp. 250-251. *"Documents of the Workers' Struggle."* These survey the independent political and economic struggle undertaken in the period immediately following the Coup in Portugal. ANNEMARIE TROGER, *"Coalition of Labor Union Women: Strategic Hope, Tactical Despair."* This is an in depth examination of the CLUW analyses: its origin, the strategic question of a woman proletariat, and the present division in the female work force as well as the subsequent division in CLUW. In conclusion, the unlikelihood of CLUW to be a revolutionary mass organization of women workers is also examined. SUSAN REVERBY, *"An Epilogue... Or Prologue to CLUW?"*

RADICAL AMERICA, Vol. 10, No. 1 (January-February, 1976)

JEAN TEPPERMAN, *"Organizing Office Workers."* Taken from research for a forthcoming book (*Not Servants, Not Machines: Office Workers Speak Up,* Boston, 1976), this article describes a new impulse toward organizing among office workers. The essay describes the kinds of organizing presently going on and discusses some of the reasons why it is happening now. Concluding remarks deal with the effects of this movement on the consciousness of office workers. MARTIN GLABERMAN, *"The Working Class."* Surveying several Marxist and non-Marxist theories, this essay examines who or what is the working class and to what extent it can be considered the key to revolutionary overthrow of this society. DAVE WELLS, JIM STODDER, *"A Short History of New Orleans Dockworkers."* A history of the interrelationship of race and class consciousness which shows how racial solidarity developed but frequently dissolved into hostility. Discussing the recent wildcat strike of 1973, it demonstrates that racial divisions were not entirely the result of manipulation by employers but that the unions are still an important bulwark of segregation. PETER BISKIND, *"The Politics of Power in 'On the Waterfront'."* One

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of many anti-Communist films produced in the early fifties, this movie by Elia Kazan is views as a child of the House Un-American Activities Committee investigations. Its presentation of a situation in which informing on criminal associates is the only honorable course of action for a just man is examined in detail.

RADICAL RELIGION, Vol. II, No. 1

P.O. Box 9164, Berkeley, California. ARTHUR I. WASKOW, *"The Messianic Tradition in Our Day."* Messianic tradition illuminates Marxism in five crucial arenas: sexuality; the relationship between humanity and nature; work; violence and the nation-state; peoplehood and the land. OLGA LUCIA ALVAREZ, *"Latin American Women, the Church, and Liberation Theology."* Bourgeois morality deformed a basically valuable Christian morality which could be recovered as a basis for a theology of the liberation of women. Describes the history of exploitation in Latin America. HENRY MORRISON, *"Redeeming the Time: Organization and Strategy for Socialist Christians."* Practical discusion of the need for a broad-based organization of the Christian left, whose purpose would be the formation of an anti-monopoly coalition. CAROL ROBB, NANCY RICHARDSON, *"The Politics and Theology of Ministry with Women."* A political and theological rationale for work with university women. Liberation theology calls for economic, political, and ideological action, but that action is not spelled out. NESTOR PAZ, *"The Christian Mystic."* Letters, journal entries, etc., document this young Bolivian's mystical-theological defense of the liberation struggle for which he died. SUZANNE HIATT, ELLEN WONDRA, *"On the Politics of Episcopal Ordination."* A careful chronology and interpretation of the struggle against sexism and for the ordination of women in the episcopal Church. RICK EDWARDS, *"Camilo-Cuba-Religion."* An interview with Sergio Arce Martinez, a Cuban minister on the revolutionary role of the Church in Cuba. DANIEL BRANDT, *"The Concept of Risk."* Concept of risk defines subjectivity and historicity into human progress, replacing the concepts of "socialization" or "participant behavior" in describing interaction between person and environment. KARL E. KLARE, ROBERT N. BELLAH, "Reflections on Reality in America, Part II." A dialogue: the unique cultural contradictions of the United States (e.g., the Adamic myth) cannot be resolved by an uncritical revival of transcendental conceptions as sources of ethical value, but instead require an historical Marxist perspective.

REVIEW OF AFRICAN POLITICAL ECONOMY, No. 4 (November, 1975)

Merlin Press, Sufferance Wharf, 2-4 West Ferry Road, London E14, England. $6 for three issues (Students $3). SAMORA MACHEL, *"The Struggle Continues."* A full text of the address given by the FRELIMO President on the occasion of Mozambique's recent independence. MAHMOOD MADANI, *"Class Struggles in Uganda."* This study of class formation and class struggle in "modern" Uganda deals with the period after 1962, when the country became formally independent. Two major high tides of class struggle are of concern here: first, the rising antagonism between the Asian commercial bourgeoisie and the African petit-bourgeoisie; and second, the growing fragmentation within the African petit-bourgeoisie itself. These are seen as the focal points of the crisis of the neo-colonial system. There is also a brief discussion of the way in which, both before and after independence, working class politics ahs been neutralized for the time being by the politics of this petit-bourgeoisie. PASCHAL MIHYO, *"The Struggle for Workers' Control in Tanzania."* The wave of strikes and workers' occupations in Tanzania over 1972-73 was the result of workers' discontent with their wages and work conditions. Workers contrasted their deteriorating situation with the high incomes of their employers and the arrogance of managers, trades unions and government officials. Using *Mwongozo* to attract support from the state, the workers took over some privately-owned factories and turned them into producer cooperatives. In some cases, the state endorsed the workers' action. But in the case of the Mount Carmel factory detailed here, it crushed the workers' movement. Plus briefings (on Nigeria, Ethiopia, Malawi), reviews, and an excellent bibliographical supplement.

REVIEW OF RADICAL POLITICAL ECONOMICS, Vol. 7, No. 3 (Fall 1975)

URPE, 41 Union Square West, Room 901, New York, 10003. $20 per year. Special Issue: "Perspectives on the Political Economy of Racism." AL SZYMANSKI, *"Trends in Economic Discrimination against Blacks in the U.S. Working Class."* Though capitalism necessarily generates racism as a means for securing menial workers and fragmenting class consciousenss, American blacks, once the objects of economic discrimination, are now being integrated into the industrial working class proper, women at an even higher rate than men. U.S. blacks are being replaced as menials by Latin Americans and West Indians, continuing a pattern in modern capitalism paralled in European migratory labor. EDWARD GREER, *"Racial Biases in the*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Property Tax System." Selection from forthcoming MR Press book looks at the limits of black reform in Gary, Indiana: an example of racial discrimination is seen in the public sector's regressive tax. MARK ALDRICH, *"Capital Theory and Racism: From Laissez-Faire to the Eugenics Movement in the Career of Irving Fisher."* Documentation of the intellectual ties between Fisher's neoclassical economic theories and his support of the eugenics movement. AZINNA NWAFOR, *"History and the Intelligence of the Disinherited."* Examples of contemporary social theories utilizing the concept of race which have justified colonial discrimination and oppression are criticized from a Marxist standpoint. SARAH ELBERT, *"Good Times on the Cross: A Marxian Review."* Critique of *Time on the Cross* by Fogel and Engerman, which contests their assertion of the capitalist rationality and profitability of slavery. Social class and race relationships in American slavery are emphasized, and both the profitability of slave ownership and the treatment of the slave laborer are analyzed. Elbert uses Genovese's work to show how Fogel and Engerman's ahistorical use of neoclassical productive analysis mystifies the actual mode of production: slavery was inefficient, but socially necessary as the prime means of maintaining planter class supremacy; further, the "benign paternalism" in the treatment of slaves served as well for hegemonic social reproduction. ELIZABETH FOX-GENOVESE, *"Poor Richard at Work in the Cotton Fields: A Critique of the Psychological and Ideological Presuppositions of* Time on the Cross." Superb critique, complementary to Elbert's, focuses on how the econometrics of Fogel and Engerman distort the complexities of the political economy of southern slavery. *Time on the Cross,* because it is so bold, clearly reveals the ideological basis and scholarly futility of extreme quantification in the social sciences. EUGENE GENOVESE, *"In the Name of Humanity and the Cause of Reform."* Selection from *Roll, Jordan, Roll* shows how pre-Civil War reforms in the South consolidated the slaveowners' hegemony.

REVIEW OF RADICAL POLITICAL ECONOMICS, Vol. 7, No. 4 (Winter 1975)

FRANK ROOSEVELT, *"Cambridge Economics as Commodity Fetishism."* A predictable Marxist critique of the Cambridge school, particularly the work of Piero Sraffa and Joan Robinson. DREW S. ABARDEN, *"Optimal Planning: A Radical Critique."* Evaluation of the use of sophisticated optimization techniques such as linear programming in planned socialist economics shows that while such techniques may improve over a rule of thumb approach in local situations, their extension to an entire economy obscures the relationship between planning and the eventual construction of socialism. WILLIAM J. BARCLAY, JR., MITCHELL STENGEL, *"Surplus and Surplus Value."* Exploration of the differences between Baran and Sweezy's term "economic surplus" and Marx's "surplus value" examines the meaning of each concept's implications for a theory of productive and unproductive labor. The two concepts are shown to be operating on different levels, and thus serving different functions: "economic surplus" is general in its application, and well suited for theories of growth and underdevelopment; "surplus value" is specific to the labor process and thus serves as the basis of the more general analysis of political economy. ROBERT R. KELLER, *"Monopoly Capital and the Great Depression: Testing Baran and Sweezy's Hypothesis."* Examination of the view that monopoly capital's tendency to generate underconsumption during the 1920s caused the Great Depression focuses on three predictions: (1) Baran and Sweezy correctly assert an increase in income redistribution from capital to labor; (2) they also correctly blame the growth of monopoly capital for this development; (3) but the evidence is that underconsumption is not at the root of the process. ARTHUR DIQUATTRO, *"Market Socialism and Socialist Values."* Claims that market socialism can capture the advantages of market efficiency, but does not necessarily entail capitalism's shortcomings. The market as an allocative device (distinguished from its distributive function) does not need to include bourgeois material incentives or an unequal distribution of wealth and power; further, market efficiency need not result in a hierarchical or technical division of labor. Traditional socialist hostility comes from confusing contingent market relations with the class relations of capitalism. IDRIAN N. RESNICK, *"Teaching Radical Economics at a Community College."* One person's experiences in an attempt to apply Friere's methods in a class at New Haven, Connecticut.

SALMAGUNDI, Nos. 31-32 (Fall 1975-Winter 1976)

Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, New York 12866. $4 per issue, $10 per year. CHRISTOPHER LASCH, *"Introduction."* This contradictory historical profile of *Salmagundi's* "sensibility" as "criticism" and "cultural radicalism" aims to distinguish itself from activist and doctrinaire stances, "cultural revolution" included. Yet the Frankfurt School is enthusiastically received as an "intelligent reappraisal" of Western culture. ERICH HELLER, *"Observations on Psychoanalysis and Modern Literature."* An analysis of the literary production of the Freudian

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

era which argues that Freud's systematization of the consciousness of his age determined that very consciousness. SUSAN SONTAG, *"Women, the Arts and the Politics of Culture: An Interview with Susan Sontag."* Sontag takes this opportunity to reflect on the shift of her position from interpretation of the formal implications of content to the "erotics" of "contentual" implications of form in light of on-going debates over the relation of aesthetics to ethics and politics. Sontag defends the autonomy of art in reasserting art's historicity and its irreducibility to politics, ethics, or ideas (content). In making jabs at the "intellectual simplicity" of feminist discourse served up as warmed-over New Left slogans, as well as at "quaint" Hegelian jargon, she criticizes the "language of failed political movements." Nevertheless, she refuses to deny the importance of any of these but questions rather the contradictory forms of their expression. She demystifies "modern sensibility" as authoritarian in its contempt for intelligence and thus history. MARTIN JAY, *"Extraterritorial Life of Siegfried Kracauer."* Kracauer's self-avowed sense of "extraterritoriality" as various forms of alienation is traced through his biography. It is concluded that Kracauer realistically criticized society and the content of Utopian visions while maintaining hope for a Utopian form. DAVID MICHAEL LEVIN, *"The Embodiment of Performance."* A phenomenological description of the mode of embodiment (performance) in modern dance as "presence" which draws upon Heidegger, Dufrenne, Ricoeur and Hegel. GEORGE STEINER, *"Text and Content."* An attempt to formulate a general hermeneutics of culture by analyzing the sociological context of reading based on the model of Soviet society. The conclusion that literature is part and parcel of the Soviet authoritarian power structure leads Steiner to claim that any model of reading is political and that the relation of text to sociological context is "undemocratic." Steiner argues that readers form an elite because they are taught to read by an elite of literary critics, thus he advocates a re-evaluation of the classics and the teaching of literature in North America. HAROLD BLOOM, *A.R. Ammons: The Breaking of Vessels."* A reading of Ammons' poems which defines the artistic mode of understanding as "creative misunderstanding." FREDRIC JAMESON, *"The Ideology of the Text."* Structuralism as the ideology of the linguistic model has failed to effect "on-going concrete modifications of the social order as a whole." Its continuation, "textuality," is an interpretive strategy that reduces the text to verbal phenomenalism by radical devaluation of content.

THE SECOND WAVE, Vol. 4, No. 2

Box 344, Cambridge A, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139. Subscription: $3.50 per year (4 issues). THE EDITORS, *"From Us."* Discussion of male violence-female counterviolence. Female resistance raises the question of the unity of means and ends versus female survival in the face of male violence. Nonviolence begins in "the revolutionary refusal to be a victim, any time, any place, for friend or foe." KAREN LINDSEY, *"The Trial of Joan Little."* ANDREA DWORKIN, *"What Is Lesbian Pride."* Speech delivered at a rally for Lesbian Pride Week in Central Park, New York, June, 1975. BETSY WARRIOR, *"Battered Lives."* An examination of the physical abuse of women (wife beating, rape, unnecessary hysterectomies, clitoridectomies, etc.) as a political crime against women rather than as an expression of individual male psychosis—political because it is the exercise of male power over women that is socially sanctioned, codified in law and justified by modern "scientific" psychoanalytic theories. PEGGY KORNEGGER, *"Why I Cried at Rhoda's Wedding."* The popular television program as an example of the exploitation of the myth of the "liberated woman," who can be slim, beautiful, have a career *and* a husband, the "I Love Lucy" of the seventies. LIZA BINGHAM, *"Secretaries: Three Voices."* Interviews with three secretaries. MAGGI POPKIN, DEBBIE ROSENBERG, *"The Abortion Business."* A survey of Boston-area abortion clinics, critical of decision-making processes motivated by corporate interests rather than patients' interests. Even those clinics which are ideologically feminist are forced, by the private health care system, to make decisions based on market concerns. Meanwhile, the women's movement created the movement, organized a mass campaign to legalize abortion, and still provides free counsellors to some clinics. In spite of these insights, the implications for feminist political strategy remain unexplored. CAROL COVEN, *"Wages for Housework, International Feminist Strategy."* Also: short stories, poetry, book reviews.

THE SOCIALIST REGISTER (1975)

ISTVAN MESZAROS, *"Jean-Paul Sartre: A Critical Tribute."* A chapter from Meszaros' forthcoming book on Sartre. This is a slightly longer version of the extract previously published in *Telos* 25. ROSSANA ROSSANDA, *"Sartre's Political Practice."* Rossanda, a central figure in the *Manifesto* group in Italy, reviews Sartre's political choices and activities since the war. The essay

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is realy an exercise in self-reflection since the difficulties of the European intellectual, personified by Sartre, define the situation in which Rossanda and her colleagues also find themselves. MARCEL LIEBMAN, *"Bukharinism, Revolution and Social Development."* Review of Stephen Cohen's *Bukharin and the Russian Revolution.* ERNEST MANDEL, *"Liebman and Leninism."* review of Liebman's *Leninism under Lenin.* ROLAND LEW, *"Maoism and the Chinese Revolution."* Lew discusses the differences in social context and ideology between the Soviet and Chinese experiences. HAMZA ALAVI, *"India and the Colonial Mode of Production."* Alavi attempts to theorize a "colonial mode of production" as a subsidiary element of imperialism, using the Indian example as a guide. This represents an attempt to better understand the hybrid quality of Third World economies, and, as such, is a continuation of Alavi's previous work. BASIL DAVIDSON, *"Notes on the Revolution in Somalia."* ANTHONY ARBLASTER, *"What Is Violence?"* A critique of various theories, or non-theories, of this subject. LESLIE SKLAIR, *"The Struggle Against the Housing Finance Act."* MICHAEL BARRATT BROWN, KEN COATES, TONY TOPHAM, *"Workers' Control versus 'Revolutionary' Theory."* A reply to an article by Richard Hyman, of the International Socialists, which appeared in *Socialist Register* (1974), by three men associated with the Institute for Workers' Control. The article, in defending the activities of the IWC, makes strong criticisms of particular practices by the IS, as well as the latter's overall frame of reference. RALPH MILIBAND, *"Political Forms and Historical Materialism."* A review of Anderson, *Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism* and *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, focusing mainly on certain elements of the latter.

LES TEMPS MODERNES, Nos. 349-350 (August-September, 1975)

26, rue de Conde, Paris 5, France. F 28. JEANNE COMBAZ, *"Le langage des sans-langages."* A psychoanalyst, who practiced drama therapy with "delinquent" children of immigrant workers, relates her experiences and observations. HENRI KELLER, *"Amélie 1."* In this extract from a book to appear in the collection "La France sauvage," the author reflects on his experience as a miner. KIM JI HA, *"Poèmes de l'oppression."* A selection of poems by the famous South Korean poet presently jailed by the Park regime. ALAIN COSTES, *"Boris Vian et le plaisir du texte."* An extremely interesting and complex article that attempts to relate the experience of reading Boris Vian to an essentially Freudian dialectic of repression-liberation. Writing in the grand tradition of Lewis Carroll and Alfred Jarry, Boris Vian is seen as playing hide-and-seek with internal censorship mechanisms in order to decolonize infantile fantasies. PAULETTE VANHECKE-TOMASINI, *"Cronstadt 1921."* Basing her analysis on the research of Paul Avrich, the author reviews the events surrounding the Kronstadt revolt and exposes distortions and apologetics of such writers as Aragon, Bettelheim, Bruhat and Ellenstein. LUDOLFO PARAMIO, *"Sur la nature de l'Etat soviétique."* This rambling article is an examination and example of the limitations of the more advanced "orthodox" views on the nature of the Soviet regime. JEAN-MARIE CHANVIER, *"URSS: L'ère du management."* A journalistic analysis of the introduction of scientific management techniques in the Soviet Union, its causes, effects, ideological justifications, etc. Better than average in terms of its familiarity with Soviet life. ANDRE HERON, *"Le taylorisme, hier et demain."* A comprehensive article that appears to parallel Braverman's recent work (although it is not cited) while placing more emphasis on the resistance to scientific management techniques and its present impasse. URS HEIERLI, *"Bilan énergétique et developpement."* A general overview of the need for and possibilities of a model of economic development that would save energy resources. DAVID PIMENTAL *et al.*, *"Le gouffre énergétique de l'agriculture occidentale."* This article appeared in English in the November, 1973 issue of *Science*.

LES TEMPS MODERNES, No. 351 (October, 1975)

F 14. CLAUDE COLLIN, *"Révolution et contre-révolution dans les compagnes portugaises."* An examination of the agrarian structure of Portugal and changes that have occurred in this area since the collapse of the Caetano regime. The author notes that the recent peasant riots in Northern Portugal must in part be explained by the peasants' exclusion from the revolutionary process and the corresponding worsening in their situation. STATHIS DAMIANAKOS, *"De la démocratie en Grèce."* The inability of the Greek state to sustain a liberal democracy is due to "the unequal evolution of the political, social and economic structures as incarnated in the play of interactions and contradictions of these structures and reflected in the institutional armature of the state" and the subsequent chronic institutional crisis. There follows a history of Greece, from 1821 to the present, loosely based on the above. JEAN-CLAUDE GIRADIN, *"L'Etat, les nationalitaires et les autres."* Loosely sketching the problem of national minorities in Marxist analysis, the author suggests a progressive moment encoded in such minorities in terms of a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cultural autonomy that is independent of an in opposition to the state. In spite of or because of the semiological interventions, this article, while extremely suggestive, has a tendency to slip through the reader's fingers. SERGE-CHRISTOPHE KOLM, *"L'exploitation par l'inflation."* Surplus value is extracted through inflation, not only via the erosion of the buying power of salaries, but more importantly, through the erosion of the buying power of money, which redistributes wealth to capital and between sectors of capital. Central to this process is the manipulation of interest rates by a monopolistic banking sector. An important but technical article. XXX, *"IBM ou l'emergence d'une nouvelle dictature."* An ex-director of sales for IBM describes IBM's strategies for expansion, the methods by which it manipulates its clients and renders them dependent, and the tactics by which it combats nationalist tendencies in the countries within which it deals. The author further suggests that IBM, by reinforcing the power of those who have access to information, serves to increase bureaucratic tutelage. AGNES CATTANEO, *"Le témoin."* A well-written first-person narrative concerning a woman who chooses to remain with a friend who is under house arrest.

WOMEN: A JOURNAL OF LIBERATION, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Spring 1975)

3028 Greenmount Ave., Baltimore, Maryland 21218. Subscription: $5 for four issues. Issue theme: "The Cost of Living." A variety of articles on women's deteriorating position during the present economic crisis, several specifically related to women's efforts to organize trade unions (waitresses, clerical workers, domestic workers). There are also glimpses of individual women's personal experiences of the crisis in the form of inverviews, short stories, and poetry. There are too many articles to list individually, but highlights include: ELLEN CANTAROW, *"Supporting Ourselves."* This explores both the impact of the crisis on waged working women and the influence of the women's movement on women's efforts to democratize the trade unions and force them to represent more adequately women's needs. ANNEMARIE HILL, *"Don't Mourn, Organize,"* details the organization of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), and discusses the possibilities it represents and the problems it faces. The most significant piece in this particular issue is the EDITORIAL, which is a discussion of the political ramifications of the crisis as it relates to the women's movement. In addition to the problems of survival that women face, they see a two-pronged political attack that threatens feminist politics: the right-wing of the women's movement, which still clings to the notion of individual success, and promotes competition among women in a mad scramble for jobs at the top; and the male left, which attacks the women's movement for "dividing the working class" and defends the nuclear family as the worker's refuge in this time of crisis. The Editors support an autonomous women's movement which crosses class lines and unites women in struggle on all fronts.

WOMEN AND FILM, Vol. 2, No. 7 (Summer 1975)

P.O. Box 4501, Berkeley, California 94704. Subscription: $4 per year. CONNIE GREENBAUM, *"Musidora."* The organization, history and aspirations of the Musidora Festival, the First Women's Film Festival in Paris. Problems were offset by the positive impact of the festival upon the press, the participants and the organizers. BARBARA HALPERN MARTINEAU, *"Parix-Chicago: Women's Film Festivals 1974."* Collections of views of and reactions to women's film festivals in Paris and Chicago. A need exists for control by feminists of all aspects of filmmaking, including distribution and screening. Women must learn technique but must avoid getting caught in the patterns and language forced upon them by a male-dominated system of production. MARJORIE KELLER, *"Report from Knokke—Experimental 5."* Highlights of the major international showcase for avant garde film (in Knokke-Heist, Belgium). PATRICIA EVANS, *"Interview with Jill Godmilow."* An interview with the director and producer (along with Judy Collins) of *Antonia.* The aim in the film was to keep the subject complex, not to simplify her life or career and not to draw conclusions. The directors were careful not to make the film rigidly political, since they wanted to emphasize a personal struggle as opposed to a struggle of fantasies or feelings as is so often portrayed in women's films. MARION WEISS, *"Interview with Eleanor Perry."* The scriptwriter for films such as *Diary of a Mad Housewife, David and Lisa,* and other films, criticizes Hollywood's lack of respect for writers. The auteur theory of film is discredited. EILEEN McGARRY, *"Documentary Identification Process in the Cinema."* RUTH McCORMICK, *"In Defense of Nashville."* Altman's film is seen not as a put-down of Middle Americans but of the political and economic system which spawned the various characters. The ambiguity and irrationality are invitations to the audience to put facts together themselves; no easy out is provided from the ugly reality portrayed in the film. *"Filming for the City."* Interview with the Kartemquin Collective of Chicago on films which they have made and their ideology.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

	Partial Contents of Available Back Issues*
9	PAUL PICCONE: *Phenomenological Marxism* MAYNARD SOLOMON: *Beethoven, Sonata and Utopia* JEAN-PAUL SARTRE: *Replies to Structuralism* RUSSELL JACOBY: *The Politics of Subjectivity* SALVATORE VECA: *Value, Labor and the Critique of Political Economy* CARL RATNER: *Principles of Dialectical Psychology*
10	GEORG LUKACS: *Moses Hess and the Problems of the Idealist Dialectic* DAVID KETTLER: *Culture and Revolution: Lukács in the Hungarian Revolution* ANDREW FEENBERG: *Reification and the Antinomies of Socialist Thought* RUSSELL JACOBY: *Toward a Critique of Automatic Marxism* GIAIRO DAGHINI: *Lukács' Theory of the Offensive*
11	GEORG LUKACS: *On the New Edition of Lassalle's Letters* ANDREW ARATO: *Lukács' Theory of Reification* PAUL BREINES: *The Impact of Lukács and Korsch in the 1920s* PAUL PICCONE: *Dialectic and Materialism in Lukács* SILVIA FEDERICI: *Notes on Lukács' Aesthetics*
12	MIHALY VAJDA: *The Rise of Fascism in Italy and Germany* ANDRE GORZ: *Technical Intelligence and the Capitalist Division of Labor* HERBERT GINTIS: *Activism and Counter-Culture* FRED & LOU JEAN FLERON: *Administration Theory: The Communist Experience* TRENT SCHROYER: *The Dialectical Foundations of Critical Theory*
13	SERGIO BOLOGNA: *Class Composition and Theory of the Party* KAREL KOSIK: *Our Present Crisis* LUCIO COLLETTI: *The Theory of the Crash* RONALD ARONSON: *The Root of Sartre's Thought* MAYNARD SOLOMON: *Marx and Bloch* GIOVANNI PIANA: *History and Existence in Husserl* CONSTANTIN SINELNIKOV: *Early 'Marxist' Critiques of Reich*
14	RUSSELL JACOBY: *Negative Psychoanalysis and Marxism* MARIO TRONTI: *Workers and Capital* JEAN COHEN: *Max Weber and the Dynamics of Domination* PIER ALDO ROVATTI: *Fetishism and Economic Categories* TRENT SCHROYER: *Marx's Theory of the Crisis* SUSAN BUCK-MORSS: *The Dialectic of T. W. Adorno*
15	MAX HORKHEIMER: *The Authoritarian State* RUSSELL JACOBY: *Postscript to Horkheimer* PIER ALDO ROVATTI: *Critical Theory and Phenomenology* FERENC FEHER: *Is the Novel Problematic?* JOHN FEKETE: *Counterrevolution in Cultural Theory*
16	HERBERT MARCUSE: *The Philosophical Foundations of the Concept of Labor* DAVID GROSS: *On Writing Cultural Criticism* ANDRE GORZ: *The Tyranny of the Factory* RONALD ARONSON: *Sartre's Individualist Social Theory* JEAN-PAUL SARTRE: *On Maoism: An Interview* DELEUZE-FOUCAULT: *The Intellectuals and Power* MARK POSTER: *The Hegel Renaissance* JOHN HECKMAN: *Hyppolite and the Hegel Revival*

*Partial contents of issues 25 and 26 are listed on page 96 of this issue. Price for single copies of issues 9-20 is $2.00. Nos. 21-26 are $2.50. Institutions pay $3.00 for single copies of all back issues.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

	Partial Contents of Available Back Issues (continued)
17	ANTONIO CARLO: *Lenin on the Party* RUSSELL JACOBY: *Laing, Cooper and the Tension in Theory and Therapy* PIER ALDO ROVATTI: *The Critique of Fetishism in Marx's* Grundrisse ROBERT D'AMICO: *The Contours and Coupures of Structuralist Theory* MARIO TRONTI: *Social Capital* IVAN SVITAK: *Prague Spring 1968* EFRAIM SHMUELI: *Can Phenomenology Accomodate Marxism?*
18	ANDREW ARATO: *Reexamining the Second International* FRANCOIS GEORGE: *Forgetting Lenin* DICK HOWARD: *Re-reading Luxemburg* SCOTT SANDERS: *Toward a Social Theory of Literature* LUCIEN GOLDMANN: *Problems of a Sociology of the Novel* ANDRE GORZ: *Their Factories and Our People*
19	THEODOR W. ADORNO: *Theses Against Occultism* THEODOR W. ADORNO: *The Stars Down to Earth* JUERGEN HABERMAS: *On Social Identity* ANTONIN LIEHM: *Kott: Between Shakespeare and Euripides* JEAN-FRANCOIS LYOTARD: *Adorno as the Devil* ROBERT SOLOMON: *Beethoven and the Sonata Form* MAYNARD SOLOMON: *Beethoven and the Enlightenment*
20	JOHN FEKETE: *The New Criticism* THEODOR W. ADORNO: *Lyric Poetry and Society* MARTIN JAY: *The Frankfurt School's Critique of Mannheim* RONALD ARONSON: *The Ultimate Sartre?* ANTONIO CARLO: *A Redefinition of Imperialism* JEAN-CLAUDE GIRADIN: *Reading Baudrillard*
21	ANTONIO CARLO: *The Socio-Economic Nature of the USSR* BURGHART SCHMIDT: *The Politics of Epistemology* ERNST BLOCH: *Causality and Finality* ANDREW ARATO: *The Neo-Idealist Defense of Subjectivity* HANS-JUERGEN KRAHL: *Adorno's Political Contradiction* JAMES SCHMIDT: *Reply to Martin Jay* JOHN ZERZAN: *The Revolt Against Work*
22	CLAUDE LEFORT: *What Is Bureaucracy?* JOSE BAPTISTA: *Bureaucracy and Society* VINCENT DI NORCIA: *Critical Theory and Ecology* HELMUT DAHMER: *Brecht and Stalinism* MARTIN JAY: *Crutches vs. Stilts: An Answer to Schmidt* IVAN SVITAK: *Illusions of Czech Socialist Democracy* M. POSTONE, H. REINICKE: *On Nicolaus' 'Introduction' to the* Grundrisse
23	RUSSELL JACOBY: *Politics of the Crisis Theory* ANTONIN LIEHM: *Kafka in Eastern Europe* KAREL KOSIK: *Hasek and Kafka* MORTON SCHOOLMAN: *Marcuse's 'Second Dimension'* CORNELIUS CASTORIADIS: *An Interview* JOHN ALT: *Work, Culture, and Crisis*
24	JAMES SCHMIDT: *Lukács' Concept of Proletarian* Bildung JUERGEN HABERMAS: *Moral Development and Ego Identity* GIACOMO MARRAMAO: *Political Economy and Critical Theory* G.L. ULMEN: *Wittfogel's Science of Society* RICHARD WINFIELD: *The Dilemma of Labor* ROBERT D'AMICO: *Comments on* Social Amnesia JEAN COHEN: *False Premises*

Price: $3.00

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED